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SWIMSUIT ISSUE, PLAYBOY STYLE
(We left out those annoying suits)

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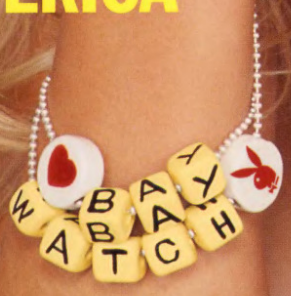
THE REAL BOOGIE NIGHTS
THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JOHN HOLMES

CRITICS' CHOICE
THE 25 BEST RESTAURANTS IN AMERICA



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PLAYBILL

SOME MAGAZINES look ahead to summer by unveiling new designs for ladies' swimsuits. At PLAYBOY, we like to bypass the bikinis in favor of the women who wear them. This is our first nonswimsuit issue—no distractions, no pretense. *The Great Swimsuit Takeoff* has a dozen pages of lotion-friendly models in various poses, from wet to wow. Our cover girl, Playmate **Marliece Andrada,** is also a beach warmer. She has just joined *Baywatch*, where she'll specialize in jump-starting (and stopping) hearts.

When it comes to the size of the ship, porn star **John Holmes** was blessed with an ocean liner. The legendary Johnny Wadd ruled adult films with his 14-inch penis and was recently immortalized in *Boogie Nights*. In *The Real Dirk Diggler*, this month's *Playboy Profile*, **Craig Vetter** takes stock of the long shadow cast by Holmes. Vetter tracked down Holmes' widow, his colleagues and the detectives who placed him in the middle of a grisly quadruple murder. It is a gripping read. Now for a real stud. **Phil Panzarella** has a loud mouth that saves lives—he's one of New York's best hostage negotiators. We asked **Edward Conlon** to tail Panzarella for the article *"I've Got a Hostage"* (art by **Mike Benny**). Panzarella's handling of an armed madman as he bargains for the lives of children is heroic.

Whether in his role as Mr. Phoebe Cates or as Mrs. Tom Selleck, **Kevin Kline** is a master of understated accomplishment. Last year he made us howl during *In and Out* and now commands our attention with his Oscar-ready role in *The Ice Storm*. "I had more offers of free assistance from women than when I set out to see Nicolas Cage, Sting or Bruce Willis," says Contributing Editor **David Sheff,** who sat with Kline for a guys-only *Playboy Interview*.

If the catchphrases of tomorrow come from the catalogs of today, then we have **John Peterman** to thank and curse. The J. Peterman catalog's pen-and-ink drawings and fanciful captions move an estimated $70 million in product a year, but Peterman is a household name thanks to his alter ego—Elaine's boss on *Seinfeld*. In a handcrafted *20 Questions* by **Warren Kalbacker,** Peterman discusses the difference between art and commerce (no, his catalog shouldn't be in the literary canon; yes, the TV character is an asshole). At the other end of our early-Empire mahogany bookshelf, you'll find a short piece of fiction (in the precatalog sense of the word). In *Keller's Last Refuge*, by **Lawrence Block,** our favorite hit man lands respectable employment—working for Uncle Sam. **Kent Williams** did the artwork.

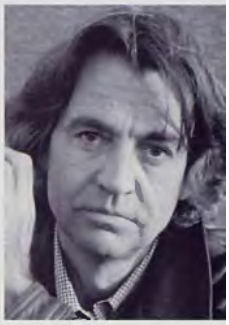
For most men, the first years after college are a dark age for meeting women. Turn to *A Guy's Guide to Dating*, by **Brendan Baber** and **Eric Spitznagel.** This is a primer on everything from how to exploit the magic of a wedding to how to avoid cybersluts. (It's an excerpt from the book by Doubleday; the piece is illustrated by **Istvan Banyai.**) To make a major impact on your date, read *Critics' Choice: The 25 Best Restaurants in America*, by **Gerry Dawes** (it's adorned with artwork by **Jean-Philippe Delhomme**). It's the canniest listing of its type and is based on the opinions of such grand chefs as Jacques Pépin and Charles Palmer. See you at Restaurant Daniel. Of course if you're going to drop a few bills on dinner, you should dress as if you can afford it. *Trend Spotting*, by Fashion Editor **Hollis Wayne,** is an ahead-of-the-curve (and -cuts) designer forecast for spring. **Stephen Wayda** also has an eye for beautiful creations. This month he has pulled off an incredible trifecta by photographing the bathing beauties, Miss March and **Jaime Pressly.** Impressive Pressly is the star of *Poison Ivy: The New Seduction*. Enjoy her PLAYBOY debut—but don't do anything rash.

VETTER

CONLON

BENNY

SHEFF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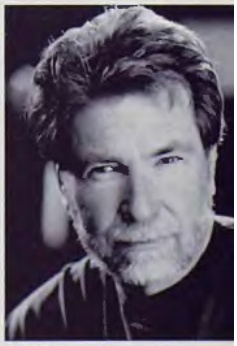
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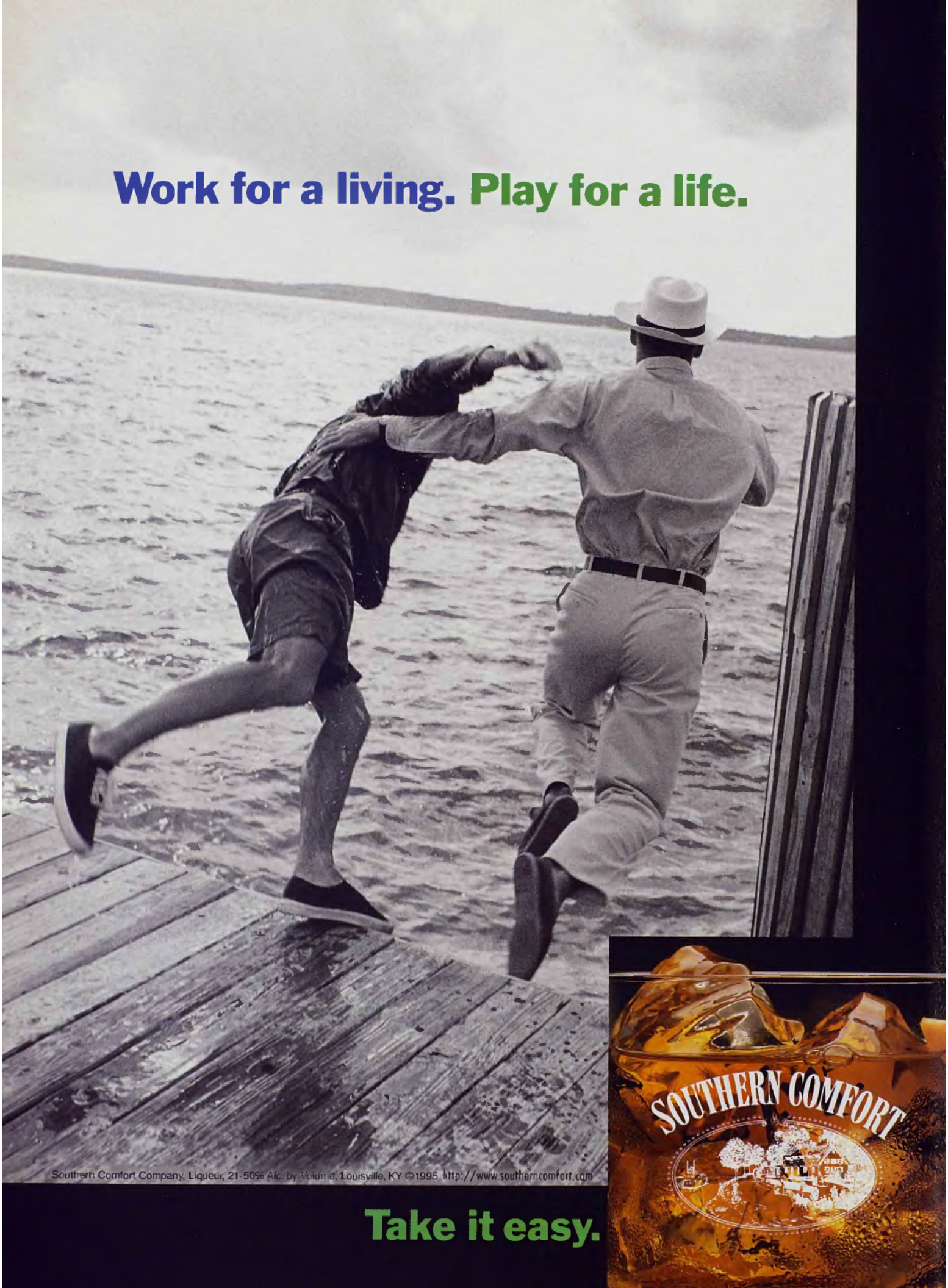

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COVER STORY

Marliece Andrada is the latest leggy beauty to star in the world's most-watched TV show. She landed her first major role as a mermaid on *Baywatch*, and a year later she's saving lives as a member of the cast and soaking up the rays in her PLAYBOY pictorial. Our cover was produced by West Coast Photo Editor Marilyn Grabowski, shot by Contributing Photographer Stephen Wayda and styled by Jennifer Tutor. Thanks to Alexis Vogel for styling Marliece's hair and makeup. Watch the Rabbit.

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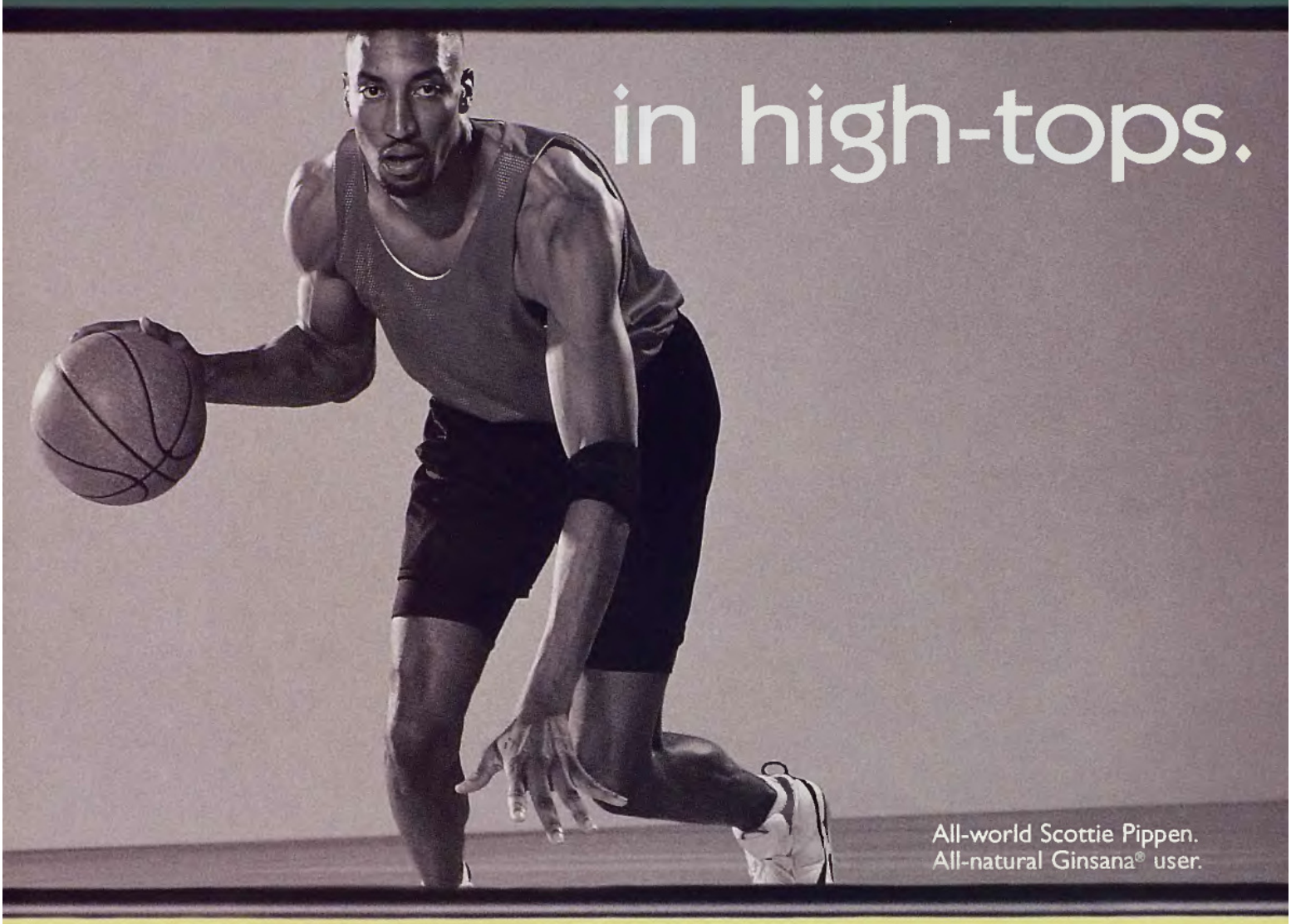

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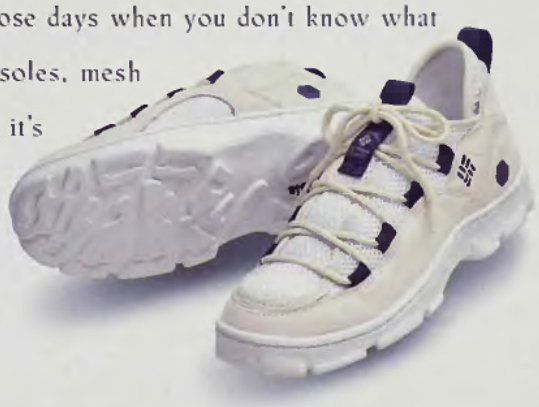

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DOWNEY AND OUT IN BEVERLY HILLS

December's Robert Downey Jr. interview is fascinating. He's a charming, articulate and talented actor who also seems to be a loving and caring father. Although Downey has violated his probation since his interview, I believe he's trying to beat his addiction—and that's not easy. I hope Hollywood and the courts will be lenient with him and keep in mind that relapse is part of recovery.

Sara Wollin
Norwalk, California

Sorry, I really have no interest in reading a *Playboy Interview* about a precocious, scandal-plagued actor's descent into drugs and his escapes from rehab. I hope that the intellectual level of your readers hasn't actually plummeted to such dismal depths.

Jay Ake
Sloughhouse, California

What a waste of a dozen pages of paper and ink.

Bill Simpson
Houston, Texas

THIS HOUSE IS ON FIRE

Congratulations on your sensational Danielle House pictorial (*O, Miss Canada*, December). The Newfoundland beauty is a knockout. Thanks for running the pages from our newspaper, *The Ottawa Sun*, complete with our masthead. We appreciate the recognition for our upfront coverage of the Danielle House saga as well as for our panache.

Mark Bonokoski
Publisher and chief executive
The Ottawa Sun
Ottawa, Ontario

I've heard John Barrymore used to say that when the missing arms of the *Venus de Milo* were found, they would have boxing gloves on them. If Barrymore could have seen Danielle House on your December cover, I wonder if he would have thought that he had seen Venus. I know that I did.

Frank Cannonito
Irvine, California

Danielle House is a good reason to raise a new flag. Go Canada.

Lance Dorgan
Maryland Heights, Missouri

What a cover. One look at Danielle and I was down for the count.

Allen Brown
Hollywood, California

Beauty, brains and brawn—that's a winning combination. Tell Danielle that a *Star Trek* marathon is just waiting to happen at my place. I'll be happy to supply all the strawberry cheesecake she can eat.

Brian Onorato
Carson City, Nevada

Call me a proud Canadian and, as of now, a lifetime PLAYBOY subscriber.

Rodney Ross
Miramichi, New Brunswick

HITTING BELOW THE BELT

It's amazing that for Amy Handelsman boxing is a source of pride (*Women Boxing*, December). Her belief in sportsmanship in the ring is ludicrous. Boxing is for people who haven't completely evolved. It's the ultimate proof that we derive from apes. The sport should have been banned eons ago. I think Handelsman has been hit in the head one time too many.

Jeff Asch
Los Angeles, California

MRS. WRONG?

What's with Cynthia Heimel? She writes about falling in love with the perfect guy, marrying him and then gaining a lot of weight in "Beware of Mr. Right" (*Women*, November). She talks about how she can't relate to him the way she

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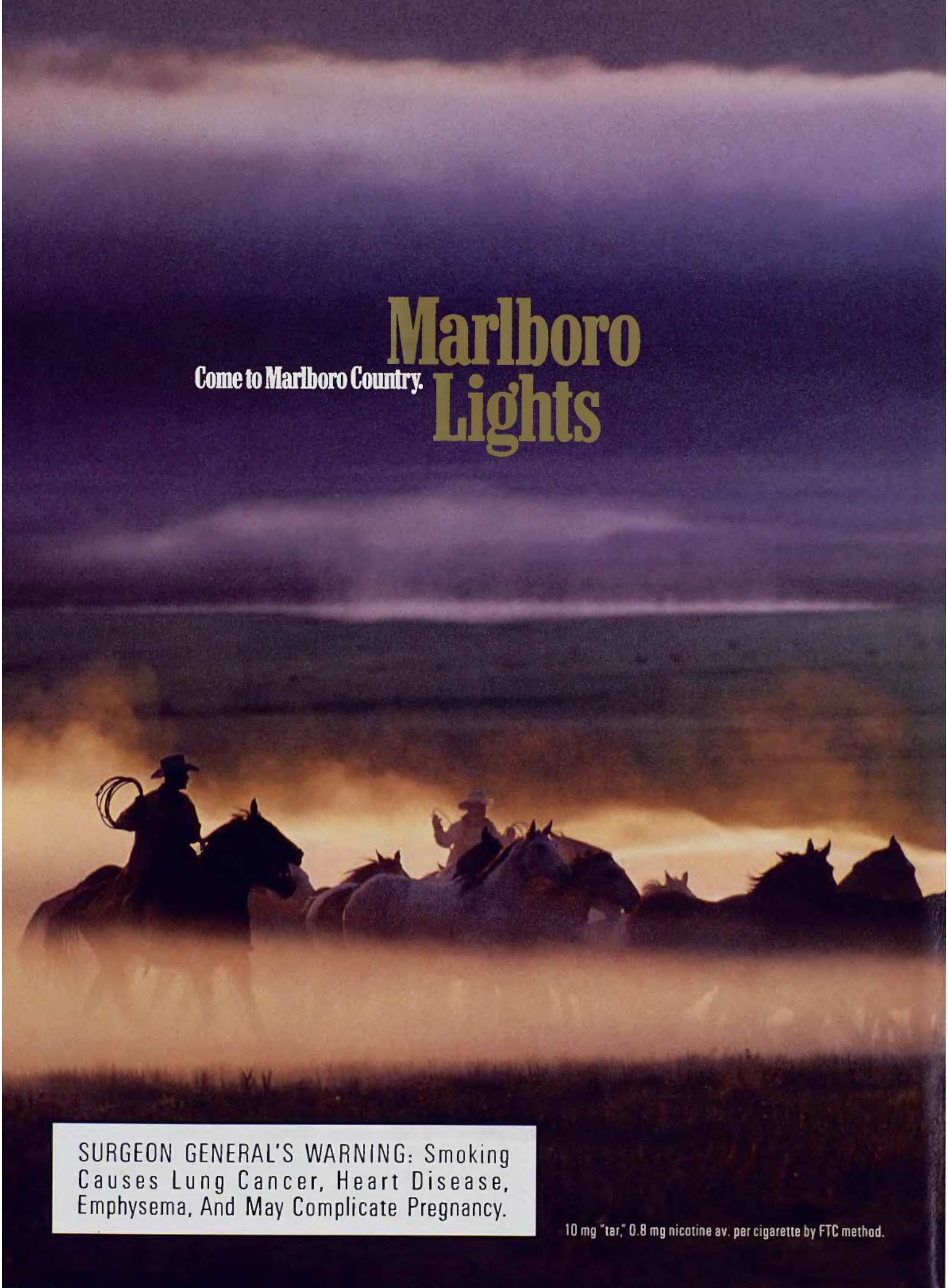
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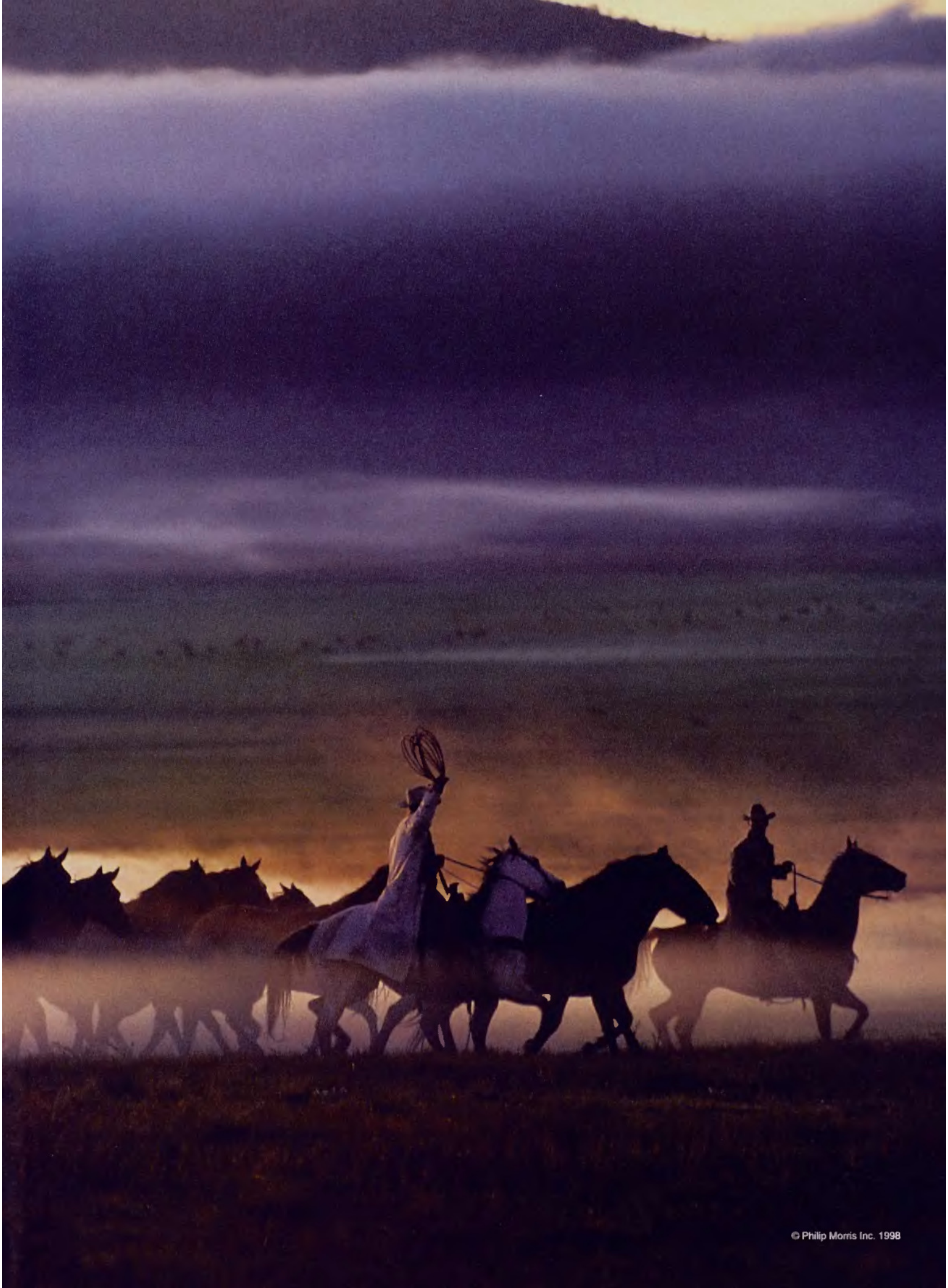
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relates to her girlfriends. I don't think that she needs a marriage counselor. Heimel should ask herself why she tries to blame everyone else for her problems.

Stew Danko
Chicago, Illinois

KING OF THE HILL

I really enjoyed the *King of the Hill Visits the Mansion* cartoon (December). PLAYBOY's editors should spice up the magazine with more of this kind of levity by adding a monthly feature of humorous adult comics.

Brian Rodgers
Grove City, Ohio

HOW ABOUT A FIG LEAF INSTEAD?

My husband has been a PLAYBOY subscriber for many years, and I have long enjoyed the magazine. But I'm disappointed with your *Sex Stars 1997* (December) pictorial. Readers are treated to full frontal nudity of beautiful women, but you tease us with the photo of sexy Matthew McConaughey. It's a magnificent classical Greek athlete's pose, until you see the hand on his crotch. How about a replay without the ridiculous hand?

Eleanor Edmondson-Collins
Grants Pass, Oregon

I only wish I were the woman whose hand covers McConaughey's private parts. Talk about jump-starting my holiday spirit.

Angie Richwine
Sedalia, Missouri

It's really great to see that PLAYBOY named Jennifer Lopez one of 1997's sex stars. Get ready, world—this is one hot Latin lady.

Freddy Garcia
Houston, Texas

BRAVOS

You covered *The History of the Bra* (December) but forgot to mention that when it was invented, it wasn't called a bra. A man by the last name of Tittsling invented the bra, and a man by the name of Brazier stole his invention. And that's why breasts are called tits and tit-slings are called bras. There was even a Broadway play on the subject.

Zoe Castellano
New Orleans, Louisiana

I notice a glaring discrepancy in *The History of the Bra*. During World War II, nylon and silk were in such short supply that women's undergarments were made of cotton. Women's stockings also went the way of the dodo for a while, as you mentioned in your *History of the Sexual Revolution, Part V* (November). Yet in your Forties picture the woman is wearing cotton undies and nylon stockings. The combination looks nice, but it isn't accurate.

Erica Olson
San Jose, California

On page 110 of *The History of the Bra*, you feature a blonde model wearing a Wonderbra and a garter belt. This ensemble is driving my husband wild, but I can't locate it anywhere. Please help.

Rhoda Ullrich
Thousand Oaks, California

Most major department stores stock the satin push-up plunge Wonderbra your husband admires. The satin garter belt came from Agent Provocateur on Broadwick Street in London. Now you can really drive your husband wild.

MISS DECEMBER HEATS THINGS UP

I've always laughed at guys who write letters to *Dear Playboy* about their favorite Playmates. But when I opened the

December issue and saw the centerfold, my laughter stopped. Karen McDougal (*Winter Wonder*) has me tripping. She's one of the dopest, finest, most beautiful women PLAYBOY has ever featured.

Derek Fritcher
Bonney Lake, Washington

PLAYBOY's Christmas Playmate, Karen McDougal, is a class act. I wish more women wore so little on days so cold.

Fox Walton
Richmond, Virginia

If beauty were equivalent to brightness, Karen McDougal's face would be the sun in a world of candles.

Scott Duflo
St. Ignace, Michigan

ONE KNIGHT STAND

I'm writing in response to the December *Men* column ("No More Damsels in Distress?"). I think every woman secretly wishes for a knight in shining armor. I'm involved in a Nineties relationship—my girlfriend and I met on the Internet. On the day I received the December issue, she sent a note telling me she had found her knight. I read Asa Baber's column after I read my girlfriend's letter. There are many self-assured women in the world holding out for a knight. So Asa, I'll be looking for you at the Round Table.

Tim Gilbert
Glassboro, New Jersey

Baber doesn't understand today's self-proclaimed independent women—the kind who want a fair shake. Men have failed to step up to the plate and meet this challenge. It's high time we "show some sack." When we do, mutual respect and old-fashioned intimacy will flourish.

Tom DeSantis
Brighton, Massachusetts

There was a time when women dated and married men for their prestigious jobs. Ambitious women of the Nineties go for the gusto on their own. Now that women are equal partners, maybe the next 15 years will bring about a lower divorce rate.

Stephen Derham
Maplewood, New Jersey

GOOD HEALTH ALL THE WEIL

The Andrew Weil profile (*Dr. Weil's Rx for Guys*, December) is fascinating. I'm intrigued by his medical philosophy and saw one of his lectures on PBS. For about half a day, I resolved to follow his advice, until a craving for pizza overwhelmed me. Once again, I'm determined to eliminate red meat and cheese from my diet. Check with me tomorrow.

Brad Hodges
Plainsboro, New Jersey

Interviewer David Sheff asked Dr. Weil about the safety of using untested alternative therapies. Perhaps Sheff would be interested to know that the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment concluded in 1978 that less than 20 percent of mainstream medical procedures had been tested and proved in controlled clinical trials. There's as much quackery performed by those who wear white lab coats as there is by those who don't.

Chris Panks
Bellingham, Washington

ROCK ON

Chris Rock (*20 Questions*, December) is fearless. Everything is eventual fodder for his humor. I always watch the opening monolog of his HBO show to see which idiot deserves a smack each week. Thanks for the interview.

Barbara Mills
Chicago, Illinois

There's nothing more impressive than good stickhandling.

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PLAYBOY AFTER HOURS

CAN DON'T

During a stunt apparently inspired by Kramer and Newman's can-refund scheme on *Seinfeld*, two New York men were arrested for trucking thousands of bottles and cans to Detroit and trying to redeem them for Michigan's generous ten-cent return. (Most East Coast states have five-cent deposits.) A supermarket detective called in the strange duo to police after he noticed the pair had been feeding the bottle return for three hours. Cops found that most of the returnables were from the New York area. They also discovered 35 trash bags of bottles and cans when they searched the pair's moving van. If they're in custody, they'll be at leisure to indulge in another *Seinfeld* pastime—the master-of-your-domain game.

AB FAB, PT. II

According to *The Independent*, the rollicking sport of gut barging is making a comeback in the U.K. Binkie "Gutfather" Braithwaite, a rare authority on the subject, explains that "one would have to place gut barging somewhere between sumo wrestling and the Peruvian territorial game of dungwatt." In other words, it's two fat guys trying to push each other out of an 8′ x 6′ ring with their bellies. In the first prominent international gut-barging event since Victorian times, Mad Maurice of Belgium managed to vanquish all challengers, including Fred "the Sour Kraut" Zeppelin. The referee put it best: "Maurice is the only man I know with the ability to make his belly button sneer."

WELCOME TO DISNEYLAND

When corporations began tacking their brand names onto stadiums (3-Com Park, Arco Arena, etc.), we knew it would only whet their appetites for more territory. Indeed, the makers of Dr. McGillicuddy's schnapps will select one of several towns in North Dakota and change its name to McGillicuddy for four years. In return, the town gets $100,000. As more money-strapped municipalities jump on this bandwagon we suggest some appropriate name changes: San Francisco to Guess; New York City to No Excuses; Las Vegas to Lays; Hollywood to Starbucks and Washington, D.C. to Smuckers.

OLD SPICE

Apparently, the rapid decline of the Spice Girls' popularity has gone unnoticed by South African president Nelson Mandela. "These are my heroes," he said of the saucy singers, who were recently in Pretoria to play a charity concert celebrating the Prince of Wales' visit. "It is one of the greatest moments of my life," the 79-year-old South African leader said as he posed for photos with the leggy quintet. "It is the second greatest moment in my life," added Prince Charles. "The greatest was the first time I met them."

SIXTIES MINUTE

Odd news from the counterculture: In New York, Mayor Rudy Giuliani received a letter from rehab veteran and acid-rock vocalist for Jefferson Airplane, Grace Slick. She was protesting the city's use of Avitrol to control the exploding pigeon population, because the drug gives the feathered friends hallucinations. (We guess that means they start thinking they can't fly.) Meanwhile in Berkeley, Merry Prankster Hall of Famer Wavy Gravy was recently called for jury duty and stated his occupation as "political clown and frozen dessert." He was chosen as jury foreman.

FLY PATTERN

We like to skip the essays in *American Journalism Review* on the public's trust of the media and go straight to the misprint page. Our favorite football-reporting folly comes from the *Herald-Banner* in Greenville, Texas: "Dallas Cowboys defensive back and Cincinnati Reds outfielder Deion Sanders does not expect a bulging dick in his back to slow him down on the football field."

PAMPERED FUNKADELIC

After the multiplatinum band No Doubt played the MTV Video Awards, they received a fax from the personal manager of longtime P-Funk All-Star Garry Shider. In it, Shider warned that he would sue if he ever again saw No Doubt drummer Adrian Young running around in a diaper. It seems that sometime during his quarter century of playing the character Diaperman (or Kid Funkadelic) in George Clinton's stage extravaganzas, Shider trademarked both the Diaperman name and the adult-sized diaper. A similar letter was sent to MTV, where, we assume, fresh-faced execs are accustomed to receiving missives in crayon.

BACK TALK

Like a hangover, there is no cure for the newest round of Seventies mania (of which *Boogie Nights* and Pam Grier are the more intoxicating side effects). One potential tonic is the new book *Retro Hell*, by the editors of *Ben Is Dead* magazine. Think of it as a hair of the dog. There are entries for esthole (an est fanatic) and Psss! (an aerosol grooming product described as "dry cleaning for

ILLUSTRATION BY GARY KELLEY

RAW DATA

SIGNIFICA, INSIGNIFICA, STATS AND FACTS

QUOTE

"And we were the Spice Boys."—EX-BEATLE GEORGE HARRISON ON THE EVOLUTION OF BRITPOP

COSMO NYETS

In a survey conducted by the All-Russia Center for Public Opinion Studies, ratio of Russian teens who said that they wanted to be hired killers to teens who said they wanted to be cosmonauts: 20 to 1.

HOME RUN RUN

Number of years Babe Ruth held the single-season home-run record (at 60 home runs): 34. Number of years Roger Maris (61 home runs) has held the record: 36.

FACT OF THE MONTH

In the past seven years, the amount of credit card debt among Americans has increased by 51 percent, from $796 billion to $1.2 trillion.

MANY UNHAPPY RETURNS

The number of unclaimed tax refunds that are being held by the IRS: 96,000. The amount of money that is waiting to be refunded: $62 million.

STEAL OF A DEAL

Amount of the six-year contract signed by Kevin Garnett of the NBA's Minnesota Timberwolves: $123 million. Value of gold from the Belgian treasury looted by Nazis and hidden in Swiss banks: $123 million.

FUEL FOR THOUGHT

Percentage of 1998 car models that have fuel efficiency ratings under 30 miles per gallon: 90. Percentage under 20 mpg: 20. Percentage of passenger cars on the road that fall into the category of light trucks: 50.

LONE STAR BARS AND GRILL

In 1997, number of executions in Texas, the state with the most: 30. Number of executions in Virginia, the state with the second-highest total: 6.

ONE OF A KIND

Number of blacks on *Forbes*' list of the 400 richest people in the U.S.: 1 (Oprah Winfrey ranked 349th).

FALLEN COMRADES

Average life expectancy for a Russian man: 57. Average life expectancy four years ago: 63.

JOCK PITCH

Of the top ten earners among athletes who pull in product endorsement fees, number who are basketball players: 3; number of golfers in the top ten: 3; number of auto racing drivers: 2; number of tennis players: 2.

TRUTH BRUSH

According to a survey by Oral B, average number of months an American uses the same toothbrush: 5. Percentage of people who use worn-out toothbrushes: 83. Percentage who brush for at least two minutes: 21. Percentage who claim to take excellent care of their teeth: 42.

DINO-MITE!

Number of Tyrannosaurus rex skeletons that have been discovered since the species was identified in 1905: 22.

NO GOLD WATCH

Number of jobs the average American college graduate will hold during his or her lifetime: 13. Number of anticipated changes of careers or professions: 7.

DAMAGED GOODS

Amount in damages that a civil jury in North Carolina ordered the second wife (and former secretary) of an insurance exec to pay his first wife for breaking up her marriage: $1 million.

—PAUL ENGLEMAN

your hair"). Most of all, there is a glossary that will help you articulate your feelings on the subject. A *retrolectual* is someone who "argues everything with outdated logic"; a *retrObGyn* is "someone who checks women for cameltoes" (the look of a woman's crotch in tight pants); *retrobvious* is when people think they're neat for remembering banal details of retro culture; and *retrobituary*, aptly, is "some futuristic possibility we can only fantasize about today."

GETTING INTO HER PANTS

Women who want to wear the rubbers in their relationships now have an option other than the female condom. The latest female contraceptive is called the Janesway (as in Jane Doe). The device is a pair of disposable cotton panties with a latex crotch panel that, according to a spokesperson, "is shaped like the inside of a woman." The only problem is that you get off before the panties do.

U.K. TITLE HOLDER

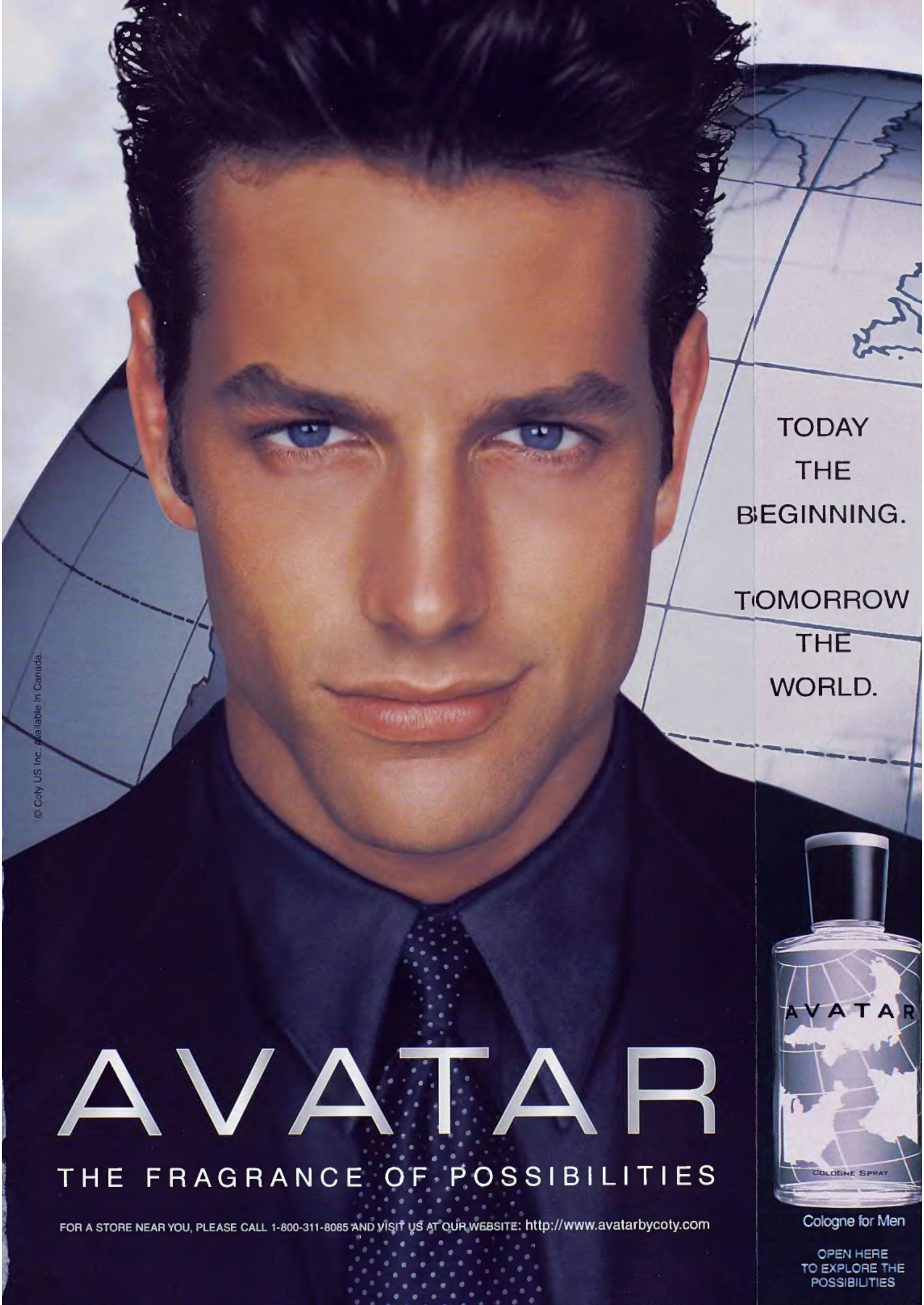
A literary group in Britain recently announced its award for the oddest book title of the year. The nominees included *Interpersonal Violence: The Practical Series*; *The Prostate: A Guide for Men and the Women Who Love Them*; and *Beyond Leaf Raking*. The winner: *The Joy of Sex: Pocket Edition*.

PHASED IN

This ought to make Star Trek conventions a lot more interesting. According to *New Scientist*, a California inventor has been granted a patent for a phaser. The "argon-fluoride discharge-pumped excimer laser" is the size of a kitchen table and uses beams of ultraviolet light to send an electrical current up to 100 meters. Unlike the one-shot tasers used by police, Herr's phaser uses no wire and may fire many shots before being reloaded. In true *Star Trek* fashion, the phaser can be set to stun painlessly or induce a heart attack. Steve Aftergood of the Federation of American Scientists says, "At first glance it seems incredible—and rather disturbing."

MO' BETTER MOVIES

In a move that may not surprise anyone, Muammar el-Qaddafi, leader of Libya and fashion consultant to Michael Jackson, is getting into showbiz. He will produce his first feature film, tentatively titled *The Strings of Desire*. No, it's not a made-for-TV tearjerker. It's a biography of Muammar. Since Libya has no film industry, Qaddafi turned to Egypt for assistance. Egyptian Nader Galal will direct, and Egyptian actor Mohi Ismail, who is said to have an uncanny resemblance to Qaddafi, will play the title role. Production was set to begin in December 1997. We can't wait.



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ici. In French it means here, but you can wear it anywhere.

MOVIES

By BRUCE WILLIAMSON

SPECIAL EFFECTS are virtually the whole show in ***Hard Rain*** (Paramount), which concerns the multimillion-dollar heist of an armored car during a flood in an Indiana town. There's water, water everywhere, and the only people left are Morgan Freeman, as the gang leader, Christian Slater, as the armored-van driver protecting the cash, Randy Quaid, as the town sheriff, and Minnie Driver, Betty White, Ed Asner and a handful of other locals. Most turn out to be corrupt, and all get soaked in the course of this dark, splashy action thriller directed by Mikael Salomon. *Hard Rain* strains credibility, yet Freeman, Slater and company gamely fight the elements and one another. ¥¥½

•

Exquisite in the title role of ***Mrs. Dalloway*** (First Look), Vanessa Redgrave dominates this talky, impressive showpiece as an English society matron who spends most of her life giving parties. The parties are pleasant but empty, like most of Mrs. Dalloway's day-to-day existence. Having chosen an unadventurous life and a comfortable marriage to a politician, she frequently wonders what might have been, particularly when an ardent former suitor (Michael Kitchen) shows up at her London home. In flashbacks, Natascha McElhone plays the 30-years-younger, passionate Clarissa who has not yet decided which man to choose. Rupert Graves is a suicidal World War One veteran, whose presence in the story has little to do with Mrs. Dalloway but reflects her troubled state of mind. It's a bookish, introspective tale, with lots of interior monolog by Redgrave. Fortunately, she has mastered the essence of a faithful page-to-screen adaptation of Virginia Woolf's novel by British actress Eileen Atkins, sensitively directed by Marleen Gorris. Here is another admirable effort by all hands. ¥¥¥

•

The year is 2013, following a war and the collapse of just about everything. Enter ***The Postman*** (Warner Bros.), based on a book by David Brin. The movie version, directed by and starring Kevin Costner in the title role, depicts him as a sort of postapocalyptic hero who assumes the identity of a dead postman and rides through the ravaged countryside helping oppressed survivors. Will Patton plays the evil head of a warrior band that terrorizes townsfolk, and he kills the husband of a beautiful young woman (Olivia Williams). It's all incredibly corny and ends a generation or so later, with the unveiling of the heroic postman's statue. Costner lets *The Postman* fight the good fight for close to three hours. Feels longer. ¥

•

Grisham's *Gingerbread*: A nail-biter.

Redgrave dominates Dalloway, love prevails in gritty boxing tale and Bond combats an oily Pryce.

After all the hoopla, with director Robert Altman vowing to take his name off the film unless the producers honored his edited version, ***The Gingerbread Man*** (Polygram Films) turns out to be OK. From an original story by John Grisham, who usually writes about idealistic lawyers battling corruption, the movie deals with a shady, womanizing attorney from Savannah, Georgia. Kenneth Branagh portrays the legal eagle Rick Magruder, who messes up his life when he picks up a waitress (Embeth Davidtz) for a one-night stand. After she tearfully confides that her demented father (Robert Duvall) has been stalking her, Magruder has him put away. Faster than you can say Grisham-equals-box-office-gold, the madman escapes to set off an orgy of violence and murder. Magruder's children, who live with his ex-wife, are threatened, and he himself is soon trapped. While hurricane-strength rains darken the landscape, *Gingerbread Man* storms toward a tricky conclusion. This nail-biter features sly turns by Daryl Hannah and Robert Downey Jr. as the main man's sardonic aides. ¥¥¥

•

Mistaken identity is the gimmick that drives the plot of ***Still Breathing*** (October Films), a limp romantic comedy co-starring Joanna Going and Brendan Fraser. He's a street performer in San Antonio, Texas who believes he's destined to meet the girl of his dreams. Miss Right turns out to be a Los Angeles con artist (Going) who persuades rich men to buy worthless "fine art." They bump into each other in a café, where she mistakes him for her next mark. The rest of *Still Breathing* shows how love transforms a bad girl into a good woman—after he takes her home to meet Grandma Ida (Celeste Holm) and his eccentric friends. Given these stifling circumstances, the movie's attractive performers come up gasping for air. ¥

•

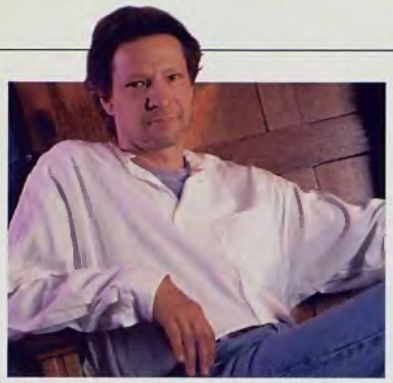
The Brits and IRA rebels in Belfast are at it again in ***The Boxer*** (Universal), but major talent makes this familiar killing ground look fresh and powerful. In his pivotal role as Danny, Daniel Day-Lewis achieves another striking transformation as a fighter who is sprung from prison after 14 years and no longer believes in violence outside the ring. Co-star Emily Watson is his former love Maggie, who married Danny's best friend and had a child while he was behind bars. Now her husband has gone to jail, and Maggie, as a prisoner's wife and the daughter of an IRA leader (Brian Cox), is bound by strict codes of honor not to resume her romance with Danny. In essence, *The Boxer* is a gritty, heart-pounding love story about a couple who face disgrace and death if they dare be together again. Cox, Gerald McSorley and Ken Stott head a fine secondary cast in a unique fight drama that makes the brutal sport of boxing look more like pacifism than pugilism. ¥¥¥½

•

Quentin Tarantino's ***Jackie Brown*** (Miramax) is a surprisingly flat and unexciting adaptation of Elmore Leonard's novel *Rum Punch*. Tarantino slows the action of the book by interpreting it as an old-style movie, with lots of on-screen titles and fades-to-black between scenes. Pam Grier has the title role as a flight attendant sneaking cash into the U.S. for a gun smuggler (Samuel L. Jackson, a scene-stealer as always). Bridget Fonda, Michael Keaton, Robert Forster and Robert De Niro have lesser roles in deadpan style. What's missing is the pace and the humor of Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction*, as well as the essence of Elmore Leonard that made 1995's *Get Shorty* so much better. ¥¥½

•

The best parts of ***As Good As It Gets*** (Tri Star) are between Jack Nicholson, as an



No lone star.

OFF CAMERA

Best known for tackling roles with a Western twang, **Chris Cooper,** 46, made his mark as a romantic leading man in 1996's *Lone Star* for director John Sayles. Now he's branching out in the remake of *Great Expectations* and in *Breast Men*, with David Schwimmer, an HBO original about two doctors who invented silicone implants. "It's sort of a black comedy, with actresses doing what were called breastamonials." He'll return to form this year in *The Horse Whisperer*, "as Robert Redford's younger brother, on the ranch back in Montana."

Cooper was born in Kansas City and grew up raising cattle. He got involved with show business to curb his teen rebellion. "Some of my peers were into petty crime, and it got kind of scary." He did sceneshifting in a regional theater, attended the University of Missouri and helped out his brother as a carpenter's assistant.

Finally, his choices were down to "acting or cattle ranching, and the bottom fell out of the cattle market. In 1976, I moved to New York to study theater." He was in the London production of *Sweet Bird of Youth* with Lauren Bacall when he was called for his first major film role in John Sayles' 1987 *Matewan*.

Cooper now lives in a small town on the Massachusetts coast with his wife and their ten-year-old son, Jesse. "He has multiple disabilities, and when I'm not working I'm with him 24 hours a day." Future plans include *Elvis Heals*, which his wife wrote. "It's basically about raising a boy with disabilities. I'll play an Elvis impersonator." Whatever else Cooper does, Texans still see him as the lawman they know from *Lone Star* and *Lonesome Dove*. "There's more recognition. Down there, you'd think I'm some kind of star."

irascible romance novelist, and a little dog next door named Verdell. Jack throws the pooch into a garbage shaft for openers but eventually reveals his soft side in this agreeable romantic comedy about three very different New Yorkers brought together by their mutual needs. Director James L. Brooks orchestrates the mix of wry wit and feel-good emotions. The dog's owner is Greg Kinnear (as a gay artist in the apartment down the hall), whom Nicholson loves to insult. He is also a thorn in the side of his favorite waitress—and score that a hit for Helen Hunt as the harried single mother who charms her obsessive-compulsive customer into something like decent behavior. Flagrantly sentimental in spots, *Good As It Gets* runs too long. Seems shorter, though, when Nicholson is making friends with his neighbor's furry mutt. It's another memorable portrait in Jack's gallery of amiable villains. ¥¥¥

•

Fiendish dark forces complicate the search for a serial killer in ***Fallen*** (Warner Bros.), a passable thriller starring Denzel Washington as a straight-arrow homicide detective. Lucky for director Gregory Hoblit (*Primal Fear*), Washington is entirely believable even when Nicholas Kazan's screenplay threatens to go off the rails. It's an eerie, far-fetched tale with a climactic twist that audiences might not swallow without Washington's credible performance. Donald Sutherland and John Goodman, as fellow officers on the force, along with Embeth Davidtz as a theology professor who knows a thing or two about the supernatural, also help make the mystery palpable. This open-ended puzzler raises more questions than it answers, but Washington's dogged curiosity is contagious. ¥¥½

•

A media giant portrayed with oily finesse by Jonathan Pryce is the villain seeking global domination in ***Tomorrow Never Dies*** (United Artists). More assured than ever, Pierce Brosnan returns in top form in the latest James Bond adventure. Since there's no news like bad news, his nemesis Pryce hopes to start a war between England and China that his worldwide network can cover. With real-life titans battling for satellite supremacy, you can't get much more up-to-date—or more sinister. Teri Hatcher plays a still-flickering old flame of Bond's, now married to Pryce, while action star Michelle Yeoh kick-boxes up a storm as Bond's ally. The 18th film in the Bond canon, *Tomorrow* inevitably shows some signs of wear but still registers as a class act. Top of the line is a wild chase through an underground garage, with 007 driving his BMW by remote control from the back seat. For a blend of wit, intrigue and sophistication, nobody does it better. ¥¥¥½

MOVIE SCORE CARD

capsule close-ups of current films
by bruce williamson

Amistad (Listed only) Spielberg's earnest drama about the trial of rebels from a slave ship. ¥¥½

As Good As It Gets (See review) Jack's a cad in this romantic comedy. ¥¥¥

The Boxer (See review) Daniel Day-Lewis punches up another wild Irish tale. ¥¥¥½

Dangerous Beauty (2/98) Venetian ladies of the evening and how they bloomed. ¥¥¥

Deconstructing Harry (2/98) He's Woody Allen, as a writer whose wronged women throw the book at him. ¥¥¥½

Desperate Measures (2/98) The bad guy is Michael Keaton, of all people. ¥¥½

Fallen (See review) Denzel gives it a lift as a detective fighting evil. ¥¥½

Four Days in September (2/98) In Brazil, rebels kidnap U.S. ambassador. ¥¥¥

The Full Monty (9/97) Brit comedy that really took off. ¥¥¥

The Gingerbread Man (See review) Altman directs Branagh in a Grisham drama. ¥¥¥

Good Will Hunting (1/98) His role as a tough, street-smart genius launches Matt Damon as a movie star. ¥¥¥¥

Hard Rain (See review) The flood waters rise while murderous thieves fall out in Indiana. ¥¥½

Jackie Brown (See review) Tarantino dilutes Leonard's *Rum Punch*. ¥¥½

Kundun (Listed only) Picture-perfect life of the Dalai Lama, replayed at length by director Scorsese. ¥¥½

The Leading Man (2/98) The womanizing star in action is Jon Bon Jovi. ¥¥¥

Live Flesh (1/98) Ex-con seduces cops' wives in an erotic Spanish tale. ¥¥¥½

Mrs. Dalloway (See review) As Woolf's heroine, Redgrave soars. ¥¥¥

The Postman (See review) Overlong, self-indulgent and Costner doesn't deliver. ¥

Still Breathing (See review) Romantic comedy that's short of oxygen. ¥

The Sweet Hereafter (1/98) School-bus tragedy shakes up a small town. ¥¥¥

Swept From the Sea (12/97) Shipwrecked sailor finds star-crossed love ashore. ¥¥¥

Titanic (Listed only) A schmaltzy love story buoyed up by awesome special effects. ¥¥¥¥

Tomorrow Never Dies (See review) 007 combats a mad media mogul. ¥¥¥½

Wag the Dog (2/98) Satire about a sexy U.S. president's damage-control group. ¥¥¥

Welcome to Sarajevo (12/97) Wartime terror where once were Olympic games. ¥¥¥½

¥¥¥¥ Don't miss ¥¥ Worth a look
¥¥¥ Good show ¥ Forget it

VIDEO

GUEST SHOT

On TV, **Cybill Shepherd** plays a woman whose world is a grab bag of surprises. In real life, her couch-potato proclivities are just as unpredictable. "I like *Sling Blade* and *Girls Town* and anything with Carole Lombard in it, particularly *My Man Godfrey*, *To Be or Not to Be* and *Twentieth Century*. I also love the Lubitsch musicals—*The Merry Widow* and *The Smiling Lieutenant*—and the recent love story *Up Close and Personal*. That movie has a lot of reverberations for me. When I was young, an older man, Peter Bogdanovich, was my mentor and started me out in the business. Robert Redford's relationship with Michelle Pfeiffer reminded me of that." Shepherd also has special feelings for Spike Lee's *Get on the Bus*. "This is unusual for me," she admits, "because I generally like movies about women, not men. But *Get on the Bus* is all about men being vulnerable—and talking about it. It's fantastic." —SUSAN KARLIN

VIDBITS

First Run Features celebrates the blue movie with ***The Radley Metzger Collection,*** erotic cult classics directed by the offbeat, provocative Sixties auteur. The hip and hypnotic black-and-white timepieces were among the first to explore such off-limits subjects as lesbianism and prostitution—and they still have a sexy edge. Among the releases: ***Therese and Isabelle*** (girl meets girl in French boarding school) and ***The Alley Cats*** (socialites, swingers and lounge cats mix, mingle and screw). . . . She's quirky and funny and brilliant. She's also the hippest nun since Sally Fields' flying version. From BBC Video comes ***Sister Wendy's Story of Painting,*** a crash course on art history hosted by the engaging Sister Wendy Beckett, a Catholic nun and art historian who's fast becoming England's favorite habit. The five-volume collection covers the masters and their masterpieces—from European cave paintings to Michelangelo's Renaissance renderings to Warhol's pop portraits. Tapes are available separately ($20) or as a set ($100).

SEQUELS, PART I

Which is better, the bold but risky dry run, or the wiser but predictable copycat? Let's go to the tapes:

The Godfather, Part II (1974): If Oscars are any measure of a film's greatness, Francis Ford Coppola's follow-up wins 6–3. This is the only sequel to copy its predecessor's win for Best Picture. We won't even discuss part three.

The Empire Strikes Back (1980): Sure, part one (*Star Wars*) broke all the rules and made history. But in chapter two the dark side of the Force gets much more interesting. Better light-saber fights, too.

The Road Warrior (1981): *Mad Max* had too much story getting in the way of the action. In part two we already know why Max is so mad—so we cut to the chase.

Rambo: First Blood Part II (1985): Rather than fight hayseed U.S. lawmen, former Green Beret Stallone goes to Cambodia, where bad guys deserve what they get.

Die Hard 2 (1990): Bruce Willis saves an airport (and his wife) from terrorists. Not as fresh as the high-rise hostage drama, but director Renny Harlin gets a high five for the ejection-seat shot.

Emmanuelle: The Joys of a Woman (1975): An erotic improvement on the original softcore classic, if only because Sylvia Kristel's husband is tolerant of her extramarital activities. Translation: lots of hots.

Terminator 2: Judgment Day (1991): *T2*'s budget was $88 million and the film took home four Oscars for technical achievements. Compare that with the original's $6.4 million budget and zero Oscars. Sometimes bigger is better.

—BUZZ MCCLAIN

LASER FARE

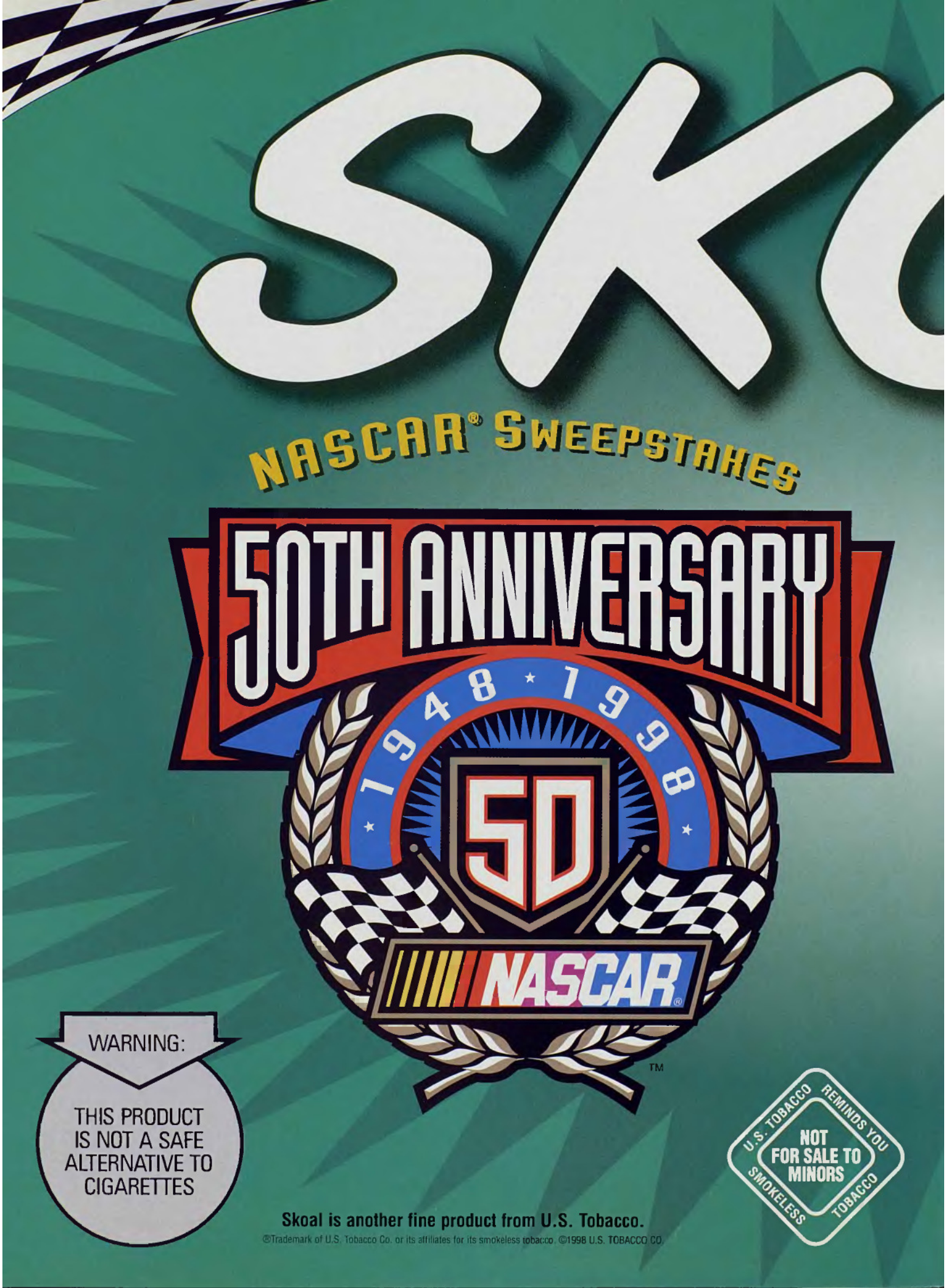
And you wondered why DVD is so cool. MGM has released a trio of James Bond classics—***Dr. No, Goldfinger*** and ***From Russia With Love***—on DVD, and they all take advantage of the format's versatile technology. *Dr. No* features scene-access trivia (allowing viewers to hopscotch among noteworthy bits within the film) and a greatest-moments montage; *Goldfinger* boasts a behind-the-scenes featurette shot during the making of the film; and *From Russia With Love* includes a "hidden page" menu feature, permitting viewers to search for factoids about the film. All three are THX-certified and include both pan-and-scan and wide-screen formats. —GREGORY P. FAGAN

X-RATED VIDEO OF THE MONTH

The thing you have to understand about Michael Nin's ***Diva 4: Sexual Aria*** (VCA) is that it's strictly girl stuff—girl does girl, girl does vibrator, girl does self (heatedly and repeatedly). And did we mention that the leading ladies are drop-dead gorgeous? As in double-take city? As in, "Are my eyes fooling me or are those supermodels rubbing each other like there's no tomorrow?" Sometimes, guys, they really don't need us.

VIDEO MOOD METER

MOOD	MOVIE
STAR TURN	***Conspiracy Theory*** (wacka hack Mel Gibson uncavers spook plot, fetching fed Julia Roberts buys it; grating Mel, but OK), ***G.I. Jane*** (buff, bald Demi Moore wants to be first Seal-in-a-skirt; most memorable line: Demi's "Suck my dick").
COMEDY	***Love Serenade*** (small-town Aussie sisters catfight over village's new DJ; good-natured and goofy), ***Money Talks*** (hyped-up hustler Chris Tucker upends Charlie Sheen's yuppie life; no Pryor–Wilder sparks, but Tucker is a keeper).
DRAMA	***She's So Lovely*** (reformed loony Sean Penn tries to charm back ex from Travolta; director Nick Cassavetes nicely plumbs dad's script), ***Dream With the Fishes*** (dying Brad Hunt hips suicidal David Arquette to reason to live; a sleeper).
ACTION	***Cop Land*** (Stallone is a low-octane lawman surrounded by dirty flatfoots; De Niro and Keitel give it grit), ***Hoodlum*** (Dutch Schultz muscles in on Harlem; gangster clichés galore, made fresh by Laurence Fishburne and Tim Roth).
SCI-FI	***Event Horizon*** (Fishburne again, here as a space captain facing intergalactic mayhem; surprisingly slick doings), ***Mimic*** (antiviral bugs engineered by biologist Mira Sorvino mutate into subway-lurking monsters; yucky and chilling).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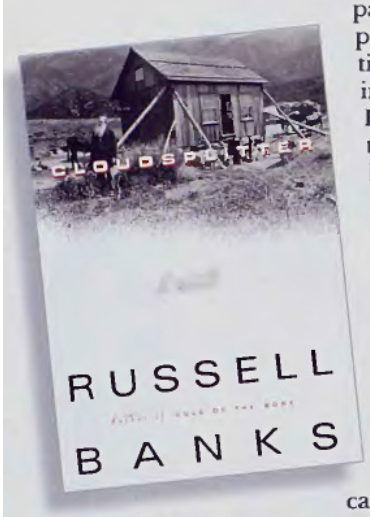
BOOKS

AMERICAN GOTHIC

Russell Banks is renowned for his novels about America's blood-red river of violence. In ***Cloudsplitter*** (Harper Flamingo), he follows it back to its source. The book—an epic 768 pages—is a fictional re-creation of the passionate and erratic life of abolitionist John Brown, who was hanged in 1859 after his failed attack on the Harpers Ferry arsenal. The story is told by his oldest son, Owen, late in his life. He calls it his father's secret history—but it is his own as well. Was John Brown mad, as many historians have suggested? Why would this white man give his life and those of his sons to the cause of freeing slaves? Powerfully told, *Cloudsplitter* is much more than a historical novel. It is a long meditation on America's shameful enslavement of 4 million people in the land of the free. It's also a captivating portrait of a 19th century family led by a man whose convictions burned like a steady blue fire, but whose complicated (and questionable) methods often hurt his family and left a great deal to be desired. Despite that, as Banks tells it, John Brown was neither a hero nor a madman, quite.



—DAVID STANDISH

MAGNIFICENT OBSESSIONS

So you think the Internet has made you an authority on everything? Five new offbeat books will challenge that assumption. Did you know that the first condoms were made of linen? Or that the inventor of cornflakes, Dr. John Kellogg, campaigned against female masturbation? For more weird facts, check out ***An Underground Education*** (Doubleday), by Richard Zacks. Then take a guided tour of 50 of America's strangest institutions in ***Offbeat Museums*** (Santa Monica Press), by Saul Rubin. Highlights include a visit to the Barney Smith Toilet Seat Art Museum, the Liberace Museum and the Cockroach Hall of Fame. ***Beat Spirit*** (Tarcher), by Mel Ash, is an interactive book of exercises inspired by Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac and Alan Watts and their cohorts. The book invites you to become invisible and master the art of going sane. Will the year 2000 bring Armageddon or Utopia? ***The Millennium: A Rough Guide to the Year 2000*** (Rough Guides), by Nick Hanna, examines the century's waning moments—festivals, parties and pilgrimages—and discusses hundreds of cults, futurists, visionaries and doomsday sects. And don't miss out on ***X-Files Confidential*** (Little, Brown), by Ted Edwards. It will confuse you just as much as the show does.

AMY CRITCHER

—HELEN FRANGOULIS

WHO DONE IT?

Elmore Leonard leads off an impressive spring mystery list with a surprise: a historical novel that turns out to be a crime caper. In ***Cuba Libre*** (Delacorte), bank robber Ben Tyler arrives in Havana harbor three days after the sinking of the *Maine* in 1898 to sell horses and smuggled guns. As the Spanish-American War explodes, he runs into gun-toting trouble. Once again, Leonard orchestrates a cast of colorful characters with vivid, distinctive voices. In ***Where Serpents Lie*** (Hyperion), T. Jefferson Parker creates one of the biggest sickos since Hannibal Lecter. This creep, who calls himself the Horridus, feeds small children to snakes. Lock the doors and turn up the lights. Robert Greer's writing becomes more powerful with each novel. In ***The Devil's Backbone*** (Mysterious Press), his Denver-based bail bondsman and detective CJ Floyd investigates the death of a rodeo champ as dead bodies pile up over a diamond mine. In the movie *Grosse Pointe Blank* we watched a hit man return to his class reunion. Now, in ***Hit Man*** (Morrow), Lawrence Block presents a professional killer who is having a midlife crisis. Using his trademark humor, Block explores the anxious thoughts of Keller as he goes about his lethal rounds. Blue Deer, Montana is experiencing a crime wave almost as big as the one that hit Cabot Cove, Maine. Jamie Harrison is there to record it in her third Blue Deer mystery, ***An Unfortunate Prairie Occurrence*** (Hyperion). A tough cop at the end of his career obsesses over the death of his son in John Peak's ***Blood Relations*** (St. Martin's). Peak uses his experience as a prosecutor in San Francisco to provide the gritty details of this police procedural. Lastly, look for Barry Siegel's ***The Perfect Witness*** (Ballantine), a thriller about a pair of lawyers, one of whom ends up in jail, accused of murder. His former partner may be the only person who can save him.

ALEX WALD

—DIGBY DIEHL

VA-VA-VA-VOOM:

In the days before topless bars, adult bookstores, massage parlors and sexually oriented chat rooms, the fun came from burlesque. If you weren't lucky enough to experience this rite of passage, ***The Queens of Burlesque: Vintage Photographs from the 1940s and 1950s*** (Schiffer Publishing), by Len Rothe, is a visual introduction. Those who remember buying a ticket for the best seat in the house will take a tantalizing trip down memory lane. *Queens* offers a front-row seat at the burlesque stage—without the comics.

—HELEN FRANGOULIS

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MUSIC

ROCK

EVEN THOUGH its live album, *The Song Remains the Same*, was a mushy disappointment, Led Zeppelin has been the biggest influence on riff-based blues-rock over the past 20 years. Guitarist Jimmy Page recently unearthed ***BBC Sessions*** (Atlantic), a raw, exhilarating two-disc live set of Led Zep in its prime. Recorded in London and Paris between 1969 and 1971, these songs are fresh, focused performances of the band's top material, and feature superb improvisations that are never self-indulgent. Robert Plant is forceful rather than florid, and Page's guitar excursions are brilliant.

When Jane's Addiction split up in 1991, vocalist Perry Farrell started Lollapalooza and guitarist Dave Navarro became a Chili Pepper. Their new record, ***Kettle Whistle*** (Warner Bros.), is a return to form—easily the reunion of the decade. Navarro brings a fellow Chili Pepper, bassist Flea, on board, and the album's four new cuts have spacey, edgy textures and sonic wallop. The half dozen live cuts tend to wander, especially the 12-minute tedium of *Three Days*. But the original demos of the majestic *Mountain Song* and *Been Caught Stealing* equal or surpass what was originally released. Let's hope they stay together this time.

A-Sides (A&M) proves that Soundgarden was grunge's answer to Led Zeppelin. Soundgarden's riffs sound like Led Zep's *Black Dog* filtered through the metal of Black Sabbath and the punk of Black Flag. This is a smart sampling of the band's Sub Pop and A&M work, including *Spoonman* and *Outshined*.

—VIC GARBARINI

Elvis Costello's ***Extreme Honey: The Very Best of the Warner Bros. Years*** (Warner Bros.) deserves a swift kick. *Oh, Veronica* is a nice piece of minor McCartney, but for the most part, this collection proves that Costello is the world's most overrated songwriter. There's more art, more fun and better vocals—by far—on AC/DC's five-disc retrospective, ***Bonfire***. High energy is still the name of the game, in my book.

—DAVE MARSH

RAP

Who's the greatest rapper? LL Cool J, the Notorious B.I.G. or Snoop Doggy Dogg work for some fans. But I think Rakim is the one. Just over ten years ago, he introduced a blend of poetic lyrics and laconic delivery that many have imitated but none have matched. The first disc of his two-CD set, ***The 18th Letter/The Book of Life*** (Universal), has 15 cuts of rhythmic complexity and vivid imagery. *Follow the Leader*, *Know the Ledge* and *Move the Crowd* are gems he recorded with his ex-DJ Eric B. On the second disc, Rakim offers ten new tracks of quality New York hip-hop that emphasize all his skills. *The Mystery (Who Is God?)* lays out Rakim's religious views. That's the kind of thing you don't hear too often from hip-hop in the Nineties.

—NELSON GEORGE

Jane's *Kettle Whistle*.

Addicted to Jane, Keith discovers reggae and Rakim is the one.

Mase, the 20-year-old protégé of hip-hop producer Sean "Puffy" Combs, has been heard on no fewer than four other artists' hits since the murder of the Notorious B.I.G. On ***Harlem World*** (Bad Boy), the New York–based Florida native's flowing drawl is magically articulate. He packs sex appeal that's simultaneously confident and diffident. He isn't above pimp or gangsta talk, but those poses serve only to establish street cred for a good-looking kid who has already set his sights on the romantic durability of an LL Cool J. Party raps like *Love U So* and the best-selling *Feels So Good* stand out. But from the fierce *24 Hours to Live* to the calm *Cheat on You*, his rhymes are destined to serve his career well.

—ROBERT CHRISTGAU

R&B

Rhythm and blues is suddenly overflowing with sexual come-ons. Two of them take radically different approaches. ***On My Way*** (LaFace), the second album by 18-year-old teen dream Usher, makes clear that losing your virginity doesn't mean surrendering all of its useful charms. Next's ***Rated Next*** (Arista) is by three Twin Cities harmonizers who are obviously influenced by their famous neighbor Prince. Next is considerably more explicit than Usher. Male and female genitalia get loving attention and, in general, carnality is viewed as a good excuse for love rather than vice versa.

—ROBERT CHRISTGAU

How great an R&B band did Lowell Fulson run? Ray Charles remains proud to have played piano in it. ***The Complete Chess Masters*** (MCA) isn't Chicago blues—instead it's full of jumping, horn-driven West Coast R&B, including Fulson's biggest hit, *Reconsider Baby*.

—DAVE MARSH

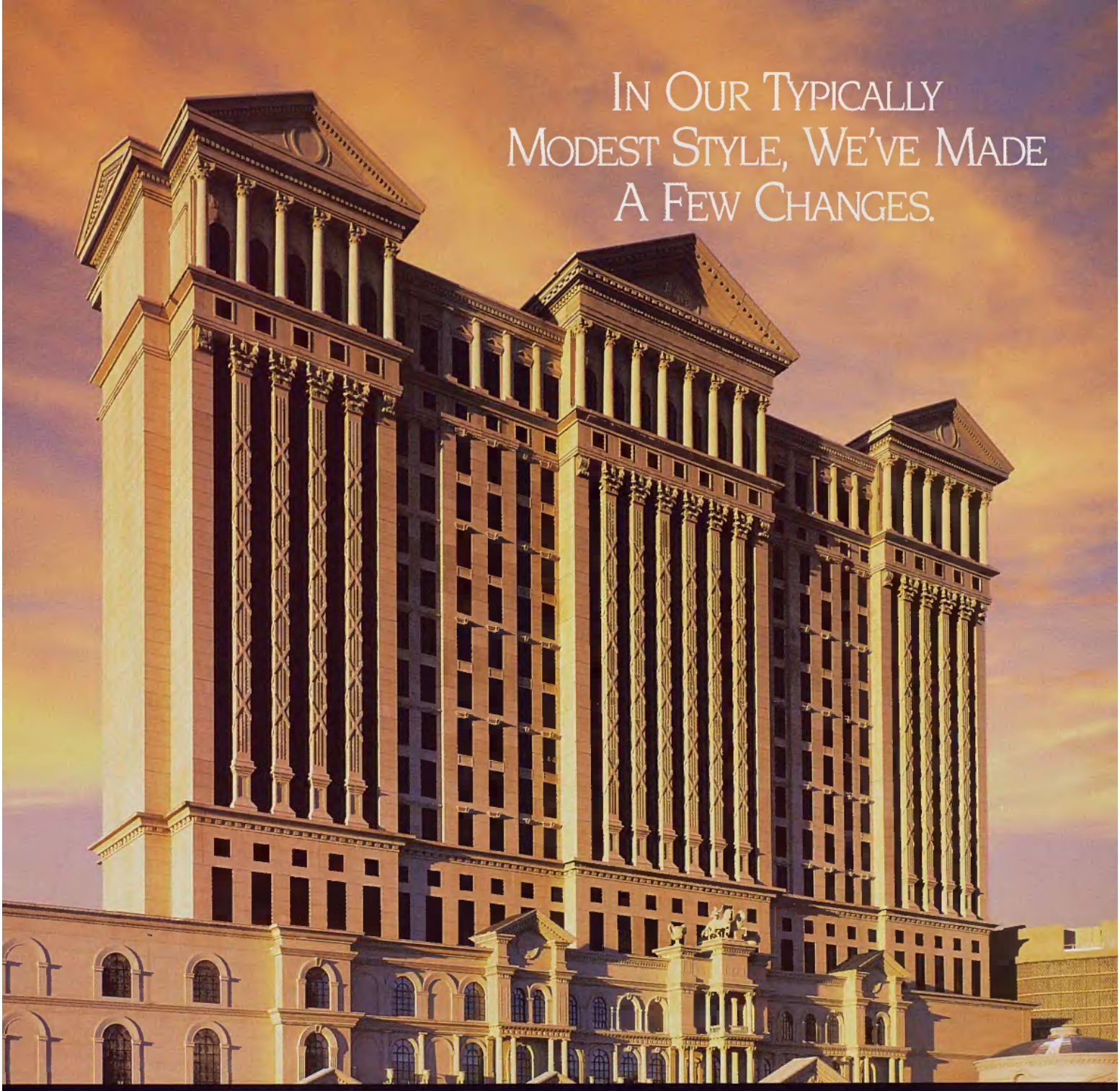
REGGAE

It shouldn't be a surprise to hear the sounds of Caribbean nightlife on a record produced by Keith Richards. But when those sounds are made by crickets and tree frogs, something strange is at work. In the case of ***Wingless Angels*** (Mindless/Island Jamaica), Keith's recording of a Rastafarian Nyabinghi drum group, it's a prelude to some of the most beautifully organic music ever waxed. This isn't a star's attempt to appropriate roots music. It feels more like a campfire documentary. Richards plays on the record, and he brought along a few friends. *Wingless Angels* mostly bases itself in quietly sensuous rhythms and sinuous vocal harmonies. Parts of it sound so ancient it's easy to imagine they originated in Africa. Other parts are unmistakably the roots of today's reggae. Songs like *On Mount Zion I* and *Rasta Army* are buoyed by abundant mysticism. Richards and his friends join in mostly to make sure the spirit translates to our ears. To me, it sounds as if for Keith, songs such as *Roll Jordan Roll* and *Rivers of Babylon* are as close as he gets to prayer.

—DAVE MARSH

FOLK

With his long white beard, grandfatherly vibe and plaintive voice, Utah Phillips looks like Santa Claus and sings like Willie Nelson. His accompaniment is usually just one acoustic guitar. It takes a certain amount of courage or presumption to present yourself so nakedly. ***The Telling Takes Me Home*** (Rounder) is a collection of old songs that were written or unearthed by Phillips. An anarchist labor organizer, he has a wonderful talent for bringing American history to life. What's wrong with learning something



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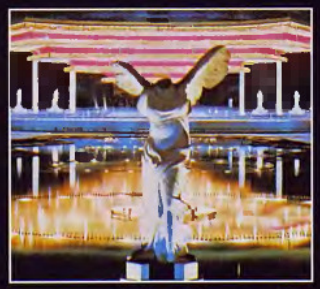

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about how the world works while you are humming along?: "Once I paid my taxes and followed every rule./Banker, boss and bureaucrat thought me a willing tool./I voted Democratic and paid the church its due./Now all those swine will have to find/Some other chump to screw."

With nothing to do in the winter except practice, Swedish musicians such as Hedningama and Garmarna have been producing a lot of great folk music. Now we can include Väsen's ***Whirled*** (Northside), an album that is guaranteed to set your head spinning with its intricate ensemble playing. —CHARLES M. YOUNG

DANCE

Urbal Beats (Polygram) is an essential introduction to European electronic dance music. Prodigy, Portishead and the Chemical Brothers are included, as is Future Sounds of London, not nearly so well known in the States. Electronic music didn't become the next big thing, but there's a lot of diversity and charm to it. Maybe *Beats* will turn the curious into converts. —NELSON GEORGE

JAZZ

Musically, neither pianist Fred Hersch nor arranger Bill Holman have much in common with Thelonious Monk. But Holman and Hersch have both created new albums that illustrate the endless possibilities of Monk's music. On the solo piano album ***Thelonious*** (Nonesuch), Hersch reveals his deep insight into the machinery of Monk's compositions. He explores and reinterprets these tunes the way classicists handle Bach. And on the big-band album ***Brilliant Corners*** (JVC), Holman's writing is magic. His techniques, concepts and even the rhythms he employs are almost 180 degrees from the master, yet he paradoxically brings the songs into focus as clearly as Monk. —NEIL TESSER

COUNTRY

There are two ways to get a feel for the San Joaquin Valley. Hightail it down California State Highway 99, or listen to Sandy Rogers' ***Green Moon*** (www.rattlerecords.com). Rogers is a songwriter who lives on an almond orchard in the Valley. Her raspy blues vocals drive the searing Stax-Volt-influenced *Trailer Up on a Hill* and the traditional honky-tonk *Wait & Wait & Wait*. Rogers wrote several songs for *Fool for Love*, Robert Altman's film version of Sam Shepard's play. Sandy Rogers has embraced the rugged, empathetic detail of Shepard's work. Coincidentally, he's her older brother.

—DAVE HOEKSTRA

FAST TRACKS

ROCKMETER

	Christgau	Garbarini	George	Marsh	Young
Jane's Addiction *Kettle Whistle*	3	9	6	6	8
Mase *Harlem World*	8	4	6	8	8
Rakim *The 18th Letter*	8	7	10	8	7
Utah Phillips *The Telling Takes Me Home*	6	7	7	7	9
Wingless Angels	6	7	6	9	7

DISORDER IN THE COURT DEPARTMENT: When **John Lydon** and his disgruntled former drummer **Robert Williams** took their legal dispute to TV's **Judge Judy,** Lydon said, "I love this country." We love you, too.

REELING AND ROCKING: Jewel may be making her feature-film debut in the Civil War drama *To Live On*. Other Jewel news: Harper Collins has paid her a cool $2 million for a volume of her poetry and memoirs. . . . **Jimmy Buffett** has sold *Where Is Joe Merchant?* to the movies. He will produce the soundtrack. . . . **Brian Wilson** and **Don Was** will co-produce Wilson's film bio. . . . **Jimmy Jam** and **Terry Lewis** did the music for *How Stella Got Her Groove Back*, starring Angela Bassett. The book by *Waiting to Exhale*'s **Terry McMillan** is about a career woman who falls in love with a 20-year-old Jamaican. . . . **Michael Jackson**'s former PR honcho **Lee Solters** is doing the **Jackie Wilson** film bio. . . . **Dwight Yoakam** has written a screenplay, *South of Heaven West of Hell*, about the exploits of a Spanish–American war hero who becomes a town marshall.

NEWSBREAKS: John Lee Hooker's club, the Boom Boom Room, has opened in San Francisco and will feature live music and dancing five nights a week. . . . A stage production of *Saturday Night Fever* will open in London in April. The **Bee Gees** have written two new songs for the show, including *Immortality*, sung by **Celine Dion** on her recent CD. . . . **U2** will be on the 200th episode of *The Simpsons* this spring. . . . Best-selling author and part-time rock guitarist **Stephen King** is lending his name to a new limited-edition guitar called the Cujo (after his novel of the same name). Only 250 will be made, each with a label signed by the author. . . **Chris Carter,** creator of *The X-Files*, has set up a new label, 1013, with **David Was.** Their first collaboration was *Songs in the Key of X* in 1996. The first two releases on the new label will be the soundtrack for the *X-Files* movie and a collection from Carter's other TV show, *Millennium*. . . . BMI, the performers' rights organization, has announced the creation of a Web robot that will quantify the use of music on different Web sites. Musicbot will do the job of nearly 24 Web surfers by making sure copyright holders don't get the shaft in cyberspace. . . . Now you can make the same sounds **Mick Fleetwood** does by owning a musical vest just like the one he uses in concert. The vest, which he activates by slapping his chest, was developed by Hotz Interactive Technology, and the software will sell for under $50. . . . A group of American artists traveled to Ireland last November to collaborate on a songwriters' summit with Irish musicians for a Putumayo record release. *Celtic Harmony* was organized by **Alan Roy Scott,** who has coordinated similar projects in Russia, Romania and Indonesia. Americans involved include **Amy Grant, Rodney Crowell, Montell Jordan, Delbert McClinton, Jane Weidlin** and **Lamont Dozier.** They will work with members of the **Cranberries, Hothouse Flowers, Clannad** and **Boyzone,** among others. . . . Fresh from his autobiography, **David Lee Roth** is ready to return to music. He plans to form a trio with friends, possibly **Billy Sheehan** and **Carmine Appice**. . . . Lastly, **Moon Zappa** gave herself a 30th-birthday present this past fall. She took a vow of silence during a six-day retreat. "I went crazy for the first two days. By the fifth day, you want to live like that forever. When you speak again, it seems funny." Heads up, Valley girls. —BARBARA NELLIS

WIRED

A GAME IN THE HAND

Nothing like a good handheld video game to distract you from commuter hell. Radica puts a virtual reality spin on its trio of titles illustrated below. The Deep Sea Fishing and Bass Fishin' games look like rods (with liquid-crystal displays) and vibrate when you hook a live one. They also have reels that click—and resist—as you pull in a fish. Tank Assault is played on a pair of binoculars. The action occurs on an LCD screen inside the viewer, with special lighting for a night-vision effect. There's also a motorcycle racing game called Trail Burner. A three-speed grip shift controls speed, steering and jumping, and the gadget bumps and vibrates when you crash. Prices range from $20 to $30. To satisfy your cerebral side, try Tiger Electronics' Brain Warp ($25). This voice-command game has a ball-like design with six pro-

MARTIN MATJE

truding shapes, brightly colored with numbers. The goal is to flip Brain Warp around, matching numbers and colors as they're announced. It's addictive. Just be careful not to elbow the guy sitting next to you.

THE LONE CLONE

The third generation of Mac clones was barely off the assembly line when Apple announced plans to end the licensing program for fear it would eventually doom the company. But one clone maker, California-based UMAX, survived the shake-up primarily because its lower-priced SuperMacs don't bite into Apple's Power Macintosh business. Call us cynical, but the idea that a clone could be more affordable yet pose no threat makes us wonder what's wrong with the machine. To find out, we tested UMAX's SuperMac C600x/280, a $1700 workhorse designed for the home office. In addition to featuring a 280-megahertz Power PC processor, 32 megs of RAM and a four-gigabyte hard drive, it has a 33.6 modem and pre-installed software. As with most computers, the C600x doesn't come with a monitor, so we hooked up Apple's 1705 Multiscan, a process that required tech support. (Yes, that's rare for a Mac, but the support was exceptional, which is even more rare.) Once the machine was humming, we noticed two differences between comparable Power Macs and the clone: The clone's price tag is about $600 less, and it comes with a scanner worth about $200. Nothing wrong with that.

CHIPPED OFF

If the Federal Communications Commission has its way, the V chip will be added to the list of standard TV features by midsummer. The controversial technology uses a rating system to block out sex, violence and other "questionable" material from television shows. Advocates call it "a tool to help parents control what their children watch," but others fear it will lead to self-censorship. Apparently, the FCC feels the benefits outweigh the threats. In a recent proposal, it called for the V chip to be installed in at least half of all new TV sets 13 inches or larger beginning July 1, 1998. It will be required on all sets by the following summer. Speaking on behalf of television makers worldwide, the Consumer Electronics

PETER PALOMBI

Manufacturers Association said the demand is impossible to meet and judged a mid-1999 launch to be more realistic. Our guess is that a compromise will be made, and the first V chip TV sets will hit homes by late 1998. Those will be followed by V chip–equipped satellite receivers and possibly VCRs.

WILD THINGS

Wait long enough and the price of technology eventually comes down. Witness handheld global-positioning systems. These devices use latitude and longitude info from Pentagon satellites to keep you from getting lost. When they first debuted about five years ago, you couldn't touch one for under $1000. Now Magellan Systems has introduced the first portable GPS unit priced under $100. The $99 Pioneer pictured here can store up to 100 way points (great for plotting your favorite fishing spots or hiking destinations). And if you're venturing into new territory, it can store one route of up to ten legs. • Short on cash and space but interested in more advanced home-theater sound? Try Virtual Listening Systems' Cyclone 3D. This $100 stereo peripheral creates the sensation of a five-speaker listening environment from only two front speakers. • Amateur auteurs will be jazzed by two new products from Videonics. The MXPro Mixer is a professional-quality digital processor with more than 500 special effects that can be incorporated into your home videos. To access your favorite effects faster, the MXPro lets you build custom menus that can be opened with the touch of a button. The price: $1800. Once you create your videos, you can excerpt them on a Web page using Videonics' Python. This MPEG-1 video-capture device lets you easily tronsfer still or moving images from a VCR, camcorder or digital camera to your computer for use in documents, e-mail or on the Net. The Python costs about $350 and comes with easy-to-use video compression, photo manipulation and presentation software.

MULTIMEDIA REVIEWS & NEWS

FUN AND GAMES

Riven, the long-awaited sequel to Myst, defines the future of interactive art. Quirky contraptions and breathtaking scenes will satisfy your intellect and your senses as you strive to save Catherine and foil the evil Ghen. Riven requires your rapt attention, but don't expect an adrenaline rush. The challenge lies in deciphering an eccentric but coherent internal logic. With fantastic animation and mystical overtones, it all adds up to a magical experience. Warning: Plan to stay up late. This game will suck you in just like its predecessor did. (By Cyan, for Mac and Windows 95, $50.)

CYBER SCOOP

If Monopoly money is the only kind you're willing to risk on the stock market, you can pretend your way to riches by dialing up ***Final Bell*** (www.finalbell.com). Not only does this stock-simulation site give you cash to play with, it also awards prizes to the best faux investors.

Real players should check out Lotus' new ***PC Quote Stock Tracker.*** This free download from the Lotus Web site (www.lotus.com/123) lets you incorporate live stock prices from the Net into 1-2-3 spreadsheets.

Traditional shooting titles take one between the eyes from a deadly trio of innovative gun games. ***Scud: The Industrial Evolution,*** a faithful adaptation of Rob Schrab's surreal comic strip, stars a disposable assassin that has been purchased from a vending machine. Gamers can engage bizarre enemies in breakneck first-person or multiplayer gun modes. (By SegaSoft, for Windows 95, $30.) ***Crypt Killer*** supplies more bang for the buck than any other gun game on the market. An abundance of levels and options add to the fun, which consists of blasting legions of ghosts, ghouls and goblins to bits. (By Konami, for Playstation, $50.) ***Area 51*** takes place in a mythic government research facility soon after an alien invasion. Take out the nasty extraterrestrials, along with the mutated humans that have been infected, and you may save the world. (By Midway Home Entertainment, for Playstation and Saturn, about $50.) Finally, to add an air of authenticity to your shoot-'em-up fun, try the Cobra Light Gun, a peripheral that works great with all three games and does double duty on both Playstation and Saturn consoles. (By Nyko Technologies, about $40.) Action gets funky with ***Interstate '76,*** a game that plays like an intense episode of *The Mod Squad*. You're a vigilante who is cruising the highways of the American Southwest, trying to bring order to a lawless land. Twenty-five custom Seventies muscle cars are at your disposal, along with an arsenal of onboard weapons. The game offers unrestricted movement through a variety of environments, realistic reactive physics and a groovy retro soundtrack. (By Activision, for Windows 95, about $50.)

Vending-machine man on a mission.

You can almost feel the g forces in ***Comanche 3.*** Armchair warriors can fly 30 different missions over meticulously detailed environments ranging from snow-capped mountains to lush jungle terrain. Exclusive 3D-rendering technology delivers unparalleled graphic realism while Dolby Surround sound combines with dead-on accurate controls for an intense combat experience. (By Nova Logic, for DOS and Windows 95, $55.)

Sentient may be the smartest game ever created. More than $1 million was spent on the artificial-intelligence engine for this epic science fiction role-playing game—and it shows. To save the doomed space station on which you are trapped, you must interact with 60 characters, each with its own personality, agenda and group allegiance. Notable game elements include a focus on communication rather than eradication, randomized subplots, multiple endings and a unique interface that allows players to converse with game characters in complex sentences. (By Psygnosis, for Playstation and Windows 95, $50.)

Jack is back in TV farm.

We didn't think the You Don't Know Jack series of CD-ROM trivia games could get much better—until we received the Television version. As with the original title and the more recent Sports and Movies editions, ***You Don't Know Jack Television*** mixes sarcastic wit with hundreds of hilarious questions. Up to three people can play in games that work with either seven or 21 questions. We love the "screw" function (it lets you force a challenger to answer a question he doesn't know) and the cheesy transitions. For a sample, look up You Don't Know Jack online at www.bezerk.com. (By Berkeley Systems, for Mac and Windows 95, $30.)

SURF CENTRAL

Those who say that the Internet is a waste of time should visit these sites. ***Compare net*** (www.comparenet.com): Do you need a new television set, vacuum cleaner or sports utility vehicle? This Web stop allows you to compare the features of a variety of products and services, including home appliances, cars, electronics and software. ***The New South Showcase*** (www.newsouth.com): One of the most comprehensive reference sources on the Net, NSS has diverse links that include the Better Business Bureau, Federal Express tracking and sites that allow you to do searches by acronym and abbreviation. ***Ain't It Cool News*** (www.aint-it-cool-news.com): If you think *Movieline* and *Entertainment Weekly* offer the best scoops on Hollywood, you haven't checked out this daily dose of Tinseltown news. Quentin Tarantino called Ain't It Cool writer Harry Knowles "the Wolf Blitzer of the Internet." Knowles definitely has mighty impressive sources. ***E/Town*** (www.e-town.com): Top consumer electronics writers (including many who have written for PLAYBOY) offer news on the latest gadgets that we crave. Consult the message boards for the buzz on DVD, DSS, HDTV and other hot topics.

DIGITAL DUDS

Noir: Staking out the hard-boiled detective genre, this PC CD-ROM ends up flatter than bootleg champagne.

Nihilist: This futuristic combat shooter gives new meaning to 3D—dull, dimwitted and derivative. Take a pass.

See what's happening on Playboy's Home Page at http://www.playboy.com.

WHERE & HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 150.

Agnes, have you seen my

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HEALTH & FITNESS

REAL MEN EAT BROCCOLI

If you are looking for smart reasons to stop eating meat and start eating veggies, ask Dr. Neal Barnard. As president of the Physicians' Committee for Responsible Medicine, he's an apostle of vegetables. And he's not alone. A third of the 12 million American vegetarians are men. Here, adapted from an article in *Vegetarian Times*, are Dr. Barnard's reasons.

Healthier heart: By the age of 23, one out of three men has at least one blockage in his heart arteries. A low-fat vegetarian diet helps keep your arteries clear and, in some cases, may open blocked arteries.

Eat clean, be lean: The average man who adopts a vegetarian diet will become ten percent leaner because grains, beans, vegetables and fruits are generally low in fat and calories.

Less cancer: Vegetarians are 40 percent less likely to develop cancer than meat eaters. Veggies, fruits, beans and soy products have anticancer properties and can boost your immune system.

Lower blood pressure: Sixty million Americans have high blood pressure. About half take drugs for it; many don't even know they have it. A veggie diet can lower your blood pressure and reduces your risk of heart attack and stroke.

Plus, says Barnard, a vegetarian diet is likely to reduce impotence and help retard balding, and eliminates the risk of food contamination from poultry and red meat.

GYM GOOFS

From our exercise experts, here are the six most common workout mistakes:

(1) Not drinking enough water: Before, during and after a workout. Drinking water is an excellent way to continue burning fat and to keep your metabolism at its peak.

(2) Exercising with bad form: Doing an exercise eight times with the correct form is more beneficial than doing 20 reps with incorrect form. Besides being inefficient, bad form can cause injuries and muscle strain.

(3) Not focusing: When you're lifting weights, it's important to focus on the muscles you're using. If you're doing a biceps curl and you're concentrating on the biceps, you will use the muscles more effectively.

(4) Repeating the same workout: If you do the same exercises all the time, your muscles will build up a tolerance. The fastest way to change your body is to shock it. Switch from machines to weights and back. Work one body part and then hit the stepper or treadmill. Work another body part and then run or step again.

(5) Not taking time off: When you're weight-training, your muscles need time to recover. Give each body part at least 48 hours to heal before working it with weights again.

(6) Going for show-off muscles: Nearly every muscle group has an opposite—and sometimes less glamorous—group that also needs working. If you work the biceps, don't neglect the triceps. The same goes for chest and upper shoulders, abdominals and back. A muscle group and its opposite group complement each other and work as a team.

. . . AND A NEW APPROACH TO WORKOUTS

Mirrors may be your enemy at the gym. It's not how you look, it's that you look at all. Mirrors, you see, are a distraction. So is music. So is peeking at the guy next to you to see how much weight he's lifting. A growing group of trainers now advise you to put down the book and concentrate more on your internal energy flow. That's the key to greater strength and better performance, according to the people behind power yoga, spinning and any of a number of rigorous mind-and-body disciplines in demand at spas, health clubs and gyms.

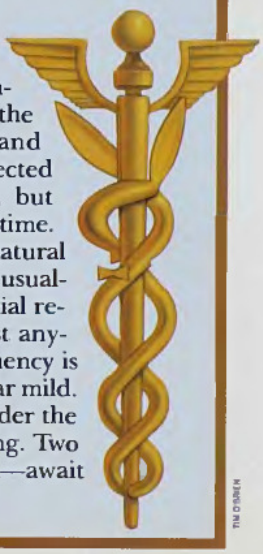
"People want more from their workouts than bigger muscles," says spiritual-awareness coordinator Dan Howard, a former competitive swimmer and coach who teaches "innercise" (his own blend of yoga, chi gong and meditation) at Canyon Ranch in the Berkshires. "Focus on your breathing," says Howard. Don't inhale deeply and puff up your chest. Deep diaphragm breathing begins and ends in your belly. Watch it balloon as you inhale; listen to the sound of your breath as you exhale.

And keep your eyes off the mirror.

DR. PLAYBOY

Q: I gave up sex years ago because of frequent impotence. The cure—injections—was as bad as the disease. Are there any new developments?

A: Approximately ten percent of American men suffer from impotence, a potentially psychologically devastating condition. For years, the primary pharmacological therapy was painful intrapenile injections. Now, researchers have developed sildenafil, the first oral impotence pill, which inhibits an enzyme and thus enhances the penile smooth-muscle relaxation and blood flow critical for erection. Injected drugs must be used prior to sex, but sildenafil is taken just once daily, any time. Even better, it enhances the body's natural reaction to erotic stimuli, so erections usually occur only in sexual situations. Initial reports are encouraging: Erections last anywhere from five to 22 minutes. Frequency is up, and side effects from the pill appear mild. The drug, which will be marketed under the name Viagra, should be out this spring. Two other pills—Spontane and Vasomax—await final approval.



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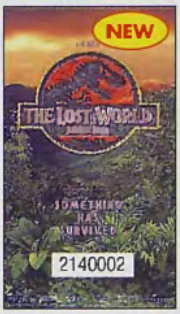

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MONEY MATTERS

By CHRISTOPHER BYRON

There is a scene in *Moby Dick* when the whale-obsessed Ahab, standing on the deck of the *Pequod*, screams the eternal lament of metaphysics into the wind: "Who's to doom, when the judge himself is dragged to the bar?" The question comes to mind in connection with the recent arrest of a 29-year-old employee at Morgan Stanley, Dean Witter for selling inside information. What Marisa Baridis did—if indeed she did it—is illegal, and she could wind up going to prison. Yet what she allegedly did is hardly unique in this runaway bull market. Insider trading is so rampant that the perpetrators barely bother to disguise their activities anymore. Nimble investors can profit legally by following in the footsteps left by insider traders.

In a minute I'll show you how to do it. First, however, the sad case of Baridis seems destined to merit more than a footnote in the history of Wall Street crime. That's because she was a compliance officer at Morgan Stanley, Dean Witter, which means she was supposed to make sure no one at the firm engaged in insider trading. Before that, Baridis held a similar job at Smith Barney.

The fact that she was charged with enforcing the law exudes a ripe irony. But who are the real hypocrites in this ugly little drama? Is it Baridis, or are they instead her superiors at Morgan Stanley, Dean Witter—and before them, her bosses at Smith Barney? Indeed, when asked by a reporter to comment on Baridis' arrest, a Morgan Stanley official sought to wash his firm's hands of the affair by explaining that she was just a "junior employee"—as if being junior meant she wasn't in a position of importance and responsibility anyway.

Insider trading is a crime that all of Wall Street tries to "game" every minute of the day. And in the sort of deal-crazed environment that now prevails, the amounts of money that can be wrung from fresh information on upcoming deals are utterly mind-blowing.

Thus, when two hotel companies—Doubletree Corp. and Promus Hotel Corp.—announced a $4.7 billion merger last September, insiders had already staked out their positions, betting that Doubletree's shares would rise from the announcement. The best evidence of that came on Friday, August 29, four days before the merger was announced. On that day, which ushered in Wall

JERRY MCDONALD

INSIDER TRADING

Street's three-day Labor Day weekend, buyers of Doubletree's shares pushed up the price nearly ten percent, to $50 per share, on more than five times normal volume, even though the Dow industrials fell more than 72 points that day. The result: a huge profit on news that had yet to be made public.

Examples like that are now so routine that no one pays attention to them. A friend of mine, recently departed from a senior position at Smith Barney, says insider trading on Wall Street is pervasive. "The basic attitude is, If you don't get greedy you'll never get caught, so don't sweat it. Hell, who's going to know?" Statistics regarding insider trading are meaningless since they reflect only those instances in which individuals get caught. Meanwhile, the Securities and Exchange Commission's Enforcement Division continues to bring no more than 50 or so insider trading cases per year—pretty much equal to what it has done throughout the Nineties—mainly because it lacks the resources to bring more. This doesn't amount to much when one considers that trading volume has nearly tripled in this decade.

So, ultimately, it comes down to this: Is there a way an everyday, law-abiding investor can legally make a buck from the corruptness of others? In fact, there is. For starters, pick a stock—maybe a dozen stocks would be better—that you want to know more about. Then sign up for an online service such as Intuit's Investor Insight, which provides charts of 15-minute-delayed stock prices, downloadable from Intuit's Web site.

The service also includes news announcements dropped in like little flags on the time lines of each stock chart. This feature allows you to see at a glance whether there was unusual trading activity on a stock before any particular news announcement. You may be able to detect the footprints of insider traders.

Once you find them, move on to step two: Write a letter to the Securities and Exchange Commission, Attn. Office of the Secretary, spelling out exactly what you've uncovered and asking to be certified as a "bounty recipient." Even though you may not succeed, it's worth a try. You can always cover your bets by going to step three: Check out an Internet service that provides downloadable copies of documents the SEC requires publicly traded companies to file.

Track the filing of so-called 144 forms on the firms you've been following. Officers and directors of public companies are required by law to file 144 forms whenever they sell restricted shares in companies they work for. Avoid companies where a lot of 144 forms are being filed—i.e., where there's been a lot of selling by corporate insiders (by then it's too late and the stock price has probably already been affected). Instead, research big, well-capitalized companies with lots of employees—companies where you'd expect to see plenty of 144 forms filed routinely. Then, look for the dog that didn't bark. In other words, look for where 144 form filings abruptly shrivel up. There's a good chance you're seeing insiders who have learned something big is coming that will give their company's stock a boost—a merger perhaps, or a new product announcement. So they've decided to sit on their hands for a while.

When it comes to insider trading, this is as near to a lawful strategy as you're likely to get. And even if it doesn't pay off, at least you'll be able to sleep with a clear conscience.

You can reach Christopher Byron by e-mail at cbscoop@aol.com.

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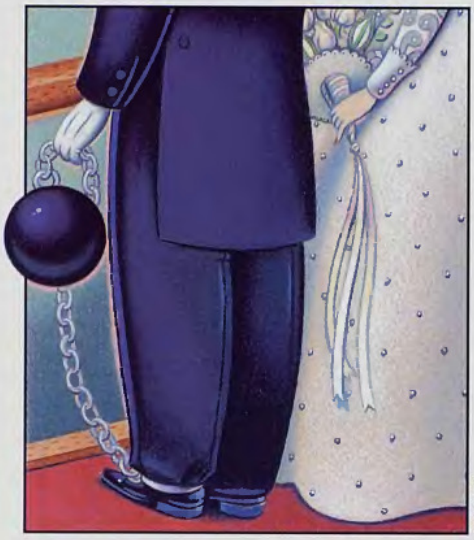
By ASA BABER



DAVE CALVER

THE MARRIAGE POTENTIAL QUIZ

Are you preparing to marry the woman of your dreams? If so, is it a wise decision on your part? I cannot answer that challenging question for you, but the following quiz can.

The product of many years of research (conducted by the National Marriage Institute of Rodeo, New Mexico), the Marriage Potential Quiz can determine whether you are psychologically capable of fitting into the institution of marriage. So sit back, relax and take the test. But please remember to be honest with yourself, because this is the one place in the universe where you can tell the truth and not be punished for it.

(1) *As a young boy (ages 5–11), I spent a lot of time:*

(a) Skipping school.

(b) Getting into fistfights.

(c) Watching girls but not talking to them.

(d) Reading bridal magazines.

(2) *During my early years, I was:*

(a) Sloppy and dumb.

(b) Passive and aggressive.

(c) Fascinated by dirty jokes.

(d) Intrigued by wedding vows as they were spoken in various religious ceremonies I attended out of simple curiosity as often as I could.

(3) *During the ages of 12 to 18, I:*

(a) Thought about sex all the time.

(b) Liked girls a lot but was still shy and awkward when talking to them.

(c) Hated school with a passion and despised all authority.

(d) Spent most of my time in my room building a miniature wedding chapel out of papier-mâché and wire, pasting on sparkling things that made the whole rig glitter under my night-light.

(4) *Watching my parents as I grew up, I concluded that:*

(a) My father was afraid to argue with my mother unless he was drunk.

(b) My mother had no respect for my father—and neither did her girlfriends or Butch, our golden retriever.

(c) My grandmother hated everybody, which is why she eventually poisoned Butch before she shot my father.

(d) My parents had a secure and loving marriage that seemed to have been made in heaven.

(5) *My fantasies during those maturing years focused specifically on:*

(a) Large-breasted women whose gorgeous red nipples stood up like tenpenny nails whenever they saw me.

(b) Foxy women with long legs who wore nothing but garter belts and who serviced me orally several times a day—in groups of two to 200.

(c) An exotic ballerina who could wrap one leg around my neck, keeping her other foot on the floor as she guided my amazingly huge penis into her smooth, throbbing love purse while another ballerina nibbled my butt and tickled my testicles.

(d) An innocuous setting of no perceptible sensuality in which I snuggled with my asexual significant other (who bore an uncanny resemblance to Martha Stewart) by a rustic fireplace.

(6) *During my college years, I primarily searched for:*

(a) Cold beer and easy broads.

(b) Term papers on the Internet.

(c) Gut courses and lazy professors.

(d) A radical feminist who wore only bulky knitted sweaters and combat boots and with whom I could help build a more just and equal society by locking all of the world's oppressive and abusive men in underground caverns that might flood accidentally, leaving me, tragically but appropriately, the only male on the planet.

(7) *When I dream about the woman I am dating and might marry, I see her as:*

(a) A ten-foot-tall cowgirl who has her lasso wrapped tightly around my neck and is pulling me through the dirt and dust toward an altar made of cactus.

(b) A female submarine captain who has me handcuffed to the conning tower as she submerges the sub and watches me through the periscope as I drown because I won't propose to her.

(c) Gloria Allred.

(d) An amazingly alluring angel of mercy who takes me up on her wings of silver to our mansion in the sky.

(8) *After one session of counseling by the psychiatrist my fiancée insists I should see (given my hesitation about marriage in general), the shrink:*

(a) Resigns from his profession and moves to Nova Scotia, where he opens a plastic-flamingo distribution center.

(b) Asks me if I've dated any good ballerinas lately.

(c) Tests me for rabies.

(d) Hugs me as he acknowledges my maturity, flexibility, self-discipline, nonaddictive behavior, wisdom, erudition and sense of cooperation and compromise in a world I didn't make.

(9) *Having thought through everything, I pick the day I am going to propose, but first I:*

(a) Have my tongue removed through outpatient surgery.

(b) Join the Marines.

(c) Hit on all my old girlfriends before I fly to Colombia.

(d) Buy the biggest diamond ring I can find and feel only happiness when I see what it costs.

(10) *Her attorney suggests my fiancée and I sign a prenuptial agreement, and when I read it, I:*

(a) Realize once again that marriage can quickly become slavery if I am faced with a vindictive partner.

(b) Question the section that says if we should happen to divorce, I am to be gassed at San Quentin while all my worldly goods are to be awarded to my ex-wife and her mother.

(c) Argue against the clause that says any children we have in the marriage can see me after the divorce only if I first submit to a lobotomy.

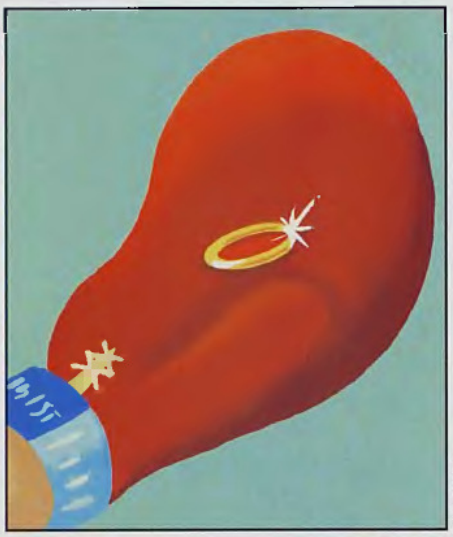
(d) Leap up from my chair, kiss the attorney's hands, kneel before my fiancée and bare my neck for my beheading while singing *As Time Goes By*.

Did you choose (d) every time?

Good for you, numbnuts.

WOMEN

By CYNTHIA HEIMEL



DAN YACCARINO

FEAR AND LOATHING IN THE BEDROOM

I could feel a horrible mood speeding into my brain. It was a strange, foreign mood, not the usual "I just suck, is all" but an opaque blackness that within the hour had overwhelmed me. Within two hours, I found myself pacing and muttering, "I want to kill myself. I want to kill myself."

This was a hell of a note.

I went into the bathroom and vomited. "It's all his fault, that bastard," I said to my reflection in the mirror. "Yeah!" said my reflection. "Fuck him forever. If you kill yourself, he's to blame!" A wave of ashy sadness contracted my stomach. I sat on the floor and wept and wept until three A.M., then I marched to the phone and dialed his number. He answered, half asleep.

"I am going to kill myself and it's all your fault," I said.

"What? Whozzit? Bloik?" he queried. I repeated my message. He repeated his. "Oh, forget it," I said and hung up. I decided to kill myself the next day and went to sleep.

I woke up, took my vitamins and my newfangled superamazing antidepressant (which has no effect), jumped on the treadmill, flailed around pointlessly, then went to my shrink.

"I just hate him, that's all, and he doesn't care if I kill myself."

My shrink looked oddly alarmed. She questioned me closely on the topic of suicide. I told her not to worry. I told her I felt perfectly OK. Besides revealing that I wanted to shred my estranged husband into teensy little pieces, I told her that it is unfair for a woman to be allowed to watch any movies in which the hero says to the heroine, "I can't live without you, you mean everything to me. I will always love you and will always take care of you and please marry me right away and we will live happily ever after and we will even do cute things at parties and people will be incredibly jealous of our perfect love."

I have read four books now about spousal abuse. I have avidly watched *Oprah*-type shows on the topic. And here's what I have discovered: The warning signs of abuse are reflected in the behavior of the leading man in any movie romance. "Happily ever after" actually means "and then he started throwing her through windows."

You know Dennis Quaid's character in *The Big Easy*, every girl's erotic fantasy? He's a perfect profile of an abuser. Also Richard Gere in *Pretty Woman*, and Nicolas Cage in *Moonstruck*. You think these are wonderful men with an offbeat sense of romance and chivalry? These are intense, controlling guys with that attractive subtext of violence. I used to be so nuts about these characters. Now, I feel fear and nausea.

The elusive bitch in movies? The one who puts the good guy through his paces but eventually crumbles into his arms (Sharon Stone in anything)? None of you guys should go near this chick in real life. She may not have the strength to throw you through windows, but she'll be happy to punch you in the face on a whim or just gaslight you into blithering idiocy. Men are even more loath than women to talk about being abused, but it happens. A lot.

From now on, I am going to identify with the heroine's best friend. I want to be Joan Blondell from any Thirties movie. She wisecracks and listens with horror to her friends' romantic travails, and meanwhile she's perfectly content with Donald O'Connor.

"It's the time line in movies," I told my shrink. "Everything has to be tension, tension, tension. The hunt, the fear, the betrayal, and within two hours the lovers have to have this big climax of blinding passion and surrender. Movies don't have time for the seasons to change or for everyone to spend careful months getting to know each other."

"I'm really much more interested in your suicidal feelings," answered my shrink.

I giggled. "It was just a funny mood," I said.

"You miss him, don't you?" she asked.

"That asshole?" I started to cry. And cry. Then, what the hell, more crying.

"I miss him so much I can't stand it. I just want to see him, I want to hug him. I just want him to tell me jokes and call me silly names. I want to sit on the couch with him and snuggle. I hate myself for wanting this."

My shrink's eyes got big and she looked as if she were also going to cry. Then she clenched her hands into little fists as she tried to explain how hard it is to break a primal connection, even when the primal connection is toxic.

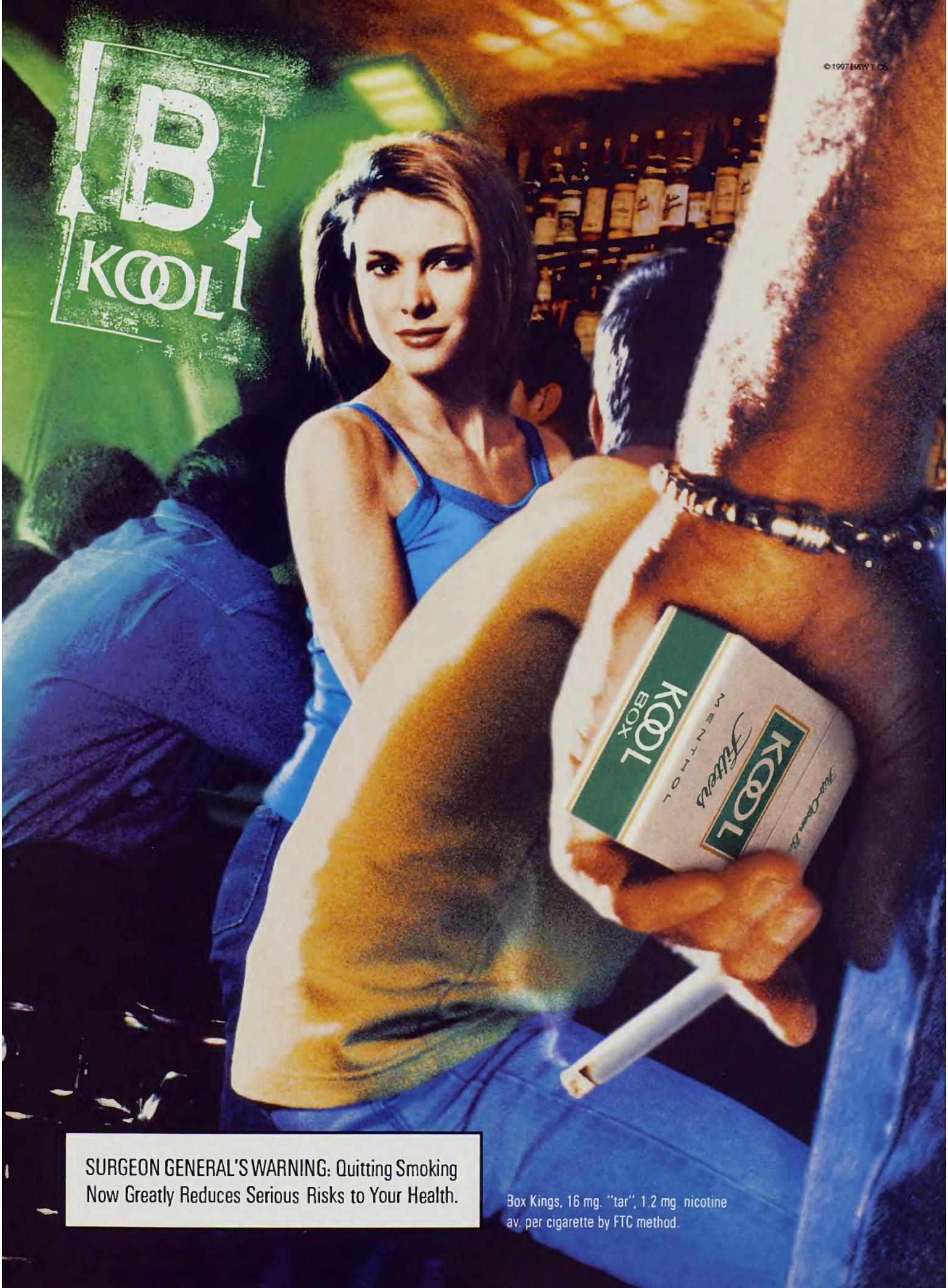
"Yearning," she said. "It's as big a human feeling as fear and anger and love, even if no one talks about it."

I wanted to go home and call him. I wanted the connection back, the connection so completely familiar that it is preverbal, a mewling, puking baby wanting to merge and lose itself in the love of the parental unit.

And what parental unit gives perfect love? None. So we replicate as best we can all the childhood weirdness, all the crossed wires of crippled communication, all the lethal manipulations perpetrated upon us as tiny humans. And we call this love. Because this is the only kind of love we know, the only kind we understand. And God help us if we fall for someone who is acting out all of this unconsciously, or someone who suffered really serious—instead of random, garden-variety—abuse.

People in abusive relationships can't stay, but they can't leave. They become paralyzed by their conflicting emotions. If you have a friend who has dropped out of sight soon after starting a romance, worry about him. He may be unable to pick up the phone.

I was lucky. I got out. I think. I just have to really try not to pick up the phone. Wish me luck. Wish me Joan Blondell-itude.



SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Quitting Smoking Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health.

Box Kings, 16 mg. "tar", 1.2 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

Around the Benz

If George Jetson were driving today, he would likely drive the F300 Life Jet by Mercedes-Benz, a one-of-a-kind concept vehicle that combines the thrill and agility of a motorcycle with the comfort of a car. The two-seat three-wheeler has a 100-horsepower four-cylinder engine borrowed from the new Mercedes-Benz A-class, an active tilt-control system for high-speed cornering and a zero-to-60 time of about seven seconds. Plus, the 156-inch-long vehicle goes up to 130 miles per hour and has detachable plastic roof panels for high-speed cruising in warm weather. The bad news is that the F300 isn't for sale, though it's currently touring auto shows around the world. Maybe if we all start bitching. . . .

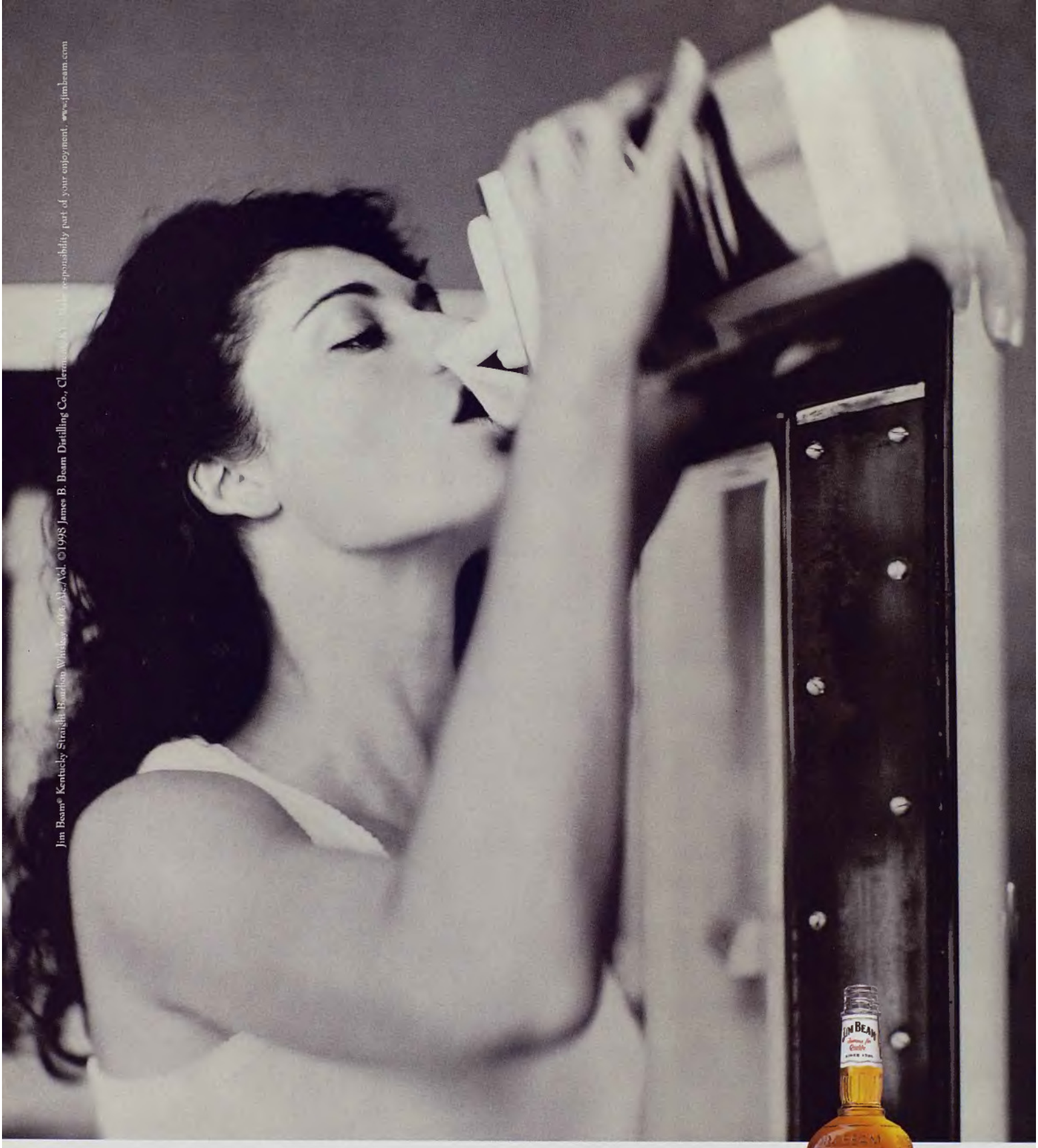
How to Fold and Pack a Suit

The folding suit bag hasn't solved all of modern man's travel problems. It doesn't always fit in an overhead compartment, and unless you're in first class, airline personnel tend to balk at hanging them up. If airlines follow through on their threats to restrict passengers to one carry-on bag, you'll need to learn the lost art of folding a suit. Our source is Stanley Ager, the ur-butler whose Ager's *Way to Easy Elegance* is a recherché hoot. We tried the method diagrammed below on two recent trips and our suit survived beautifully. Let your suit rest on a hanger for a few hours before you need to put it on. Finally, hang it in the bathroom when you take a shower to relax any wrinkles that haven't disappeared already.

HOW TO FOLD A SUIT FOR TRAVEL
EMPTY ALL POCKETS. LAY SUIT FLAT
A JACKET
1 TURN UP COLLAR. FOLD SLEEVES UP SO CUFFS REACH EDGE OF SHOULDERS.
2 TURN BACK SIDES OF JACKET TO CENTER BACK SEAM.
3 FOLD JACKET ALONG CENTER BACK SEAM.
4 FOLD UP AT WAIST.
B TROUSERS
1 FOLD POCKET LININGS AWAY FROM FRONT OF TROUSER LEGS SO AS NOT TO INTERFERE WITH THE CREASE.
2 FOLD TOP DOWN TOWARD FRONT AT AN ANGLE.
3 FOLD UP LEG SIX INCHES OR LESS BELOW KNEE.
4 FOLD UP AGAIN.

Italian Wines

Those who have acquired a taste for French wines have noticed their recent skyrocketing prices. A lot of money from Asia, South and Central America, China and Russia has been chasing after the premiere crus of Burgundy and Bordeaux. The intelligent wine drinker is wise to look elsewhere. Fortunately, Italian winegrowers are doing excellent work, and the 1997 vintage may prove to be spectacular. Angelo Gaja, whose Barolos and Barbarescos are wonderful examples of the wine maker's art, has said that 1997 "will be regarded as one of the greatest, if not the greatest, vintages of the 20th century." Although the wines from this season will take many years to age properly, there are several excellent vintages that are ready for you to enjoy. Seek out the Piedmont wines (Barolo, Barbaresco) from Angelo Gaja, Aldo Conterno and Vietti. Often, these wines are from single vineyards. Vintages that are fit to drink include the 1971, 1979, 1982 and 1986. Also investigate the wines of Tuscany, particularly Chianti Classico and Brunello di Montalcino. The Vino da Tavolos (table wines) are among the most modestly priced, but many can be excellent, depending on the producer. Antinori, for example, is highly regarded, particularly its vintages of 1990, 1988, 1986, 1985 and 1982. For more on the top producers and vintages, consult the section on Italian wines in *Parker's Wine Buyer's Guide* by Robert Parker. In the meantime, sip a 1971 Barolo from Aldo Conterno.



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Get in touch with your masculine side.

MANTRACK

Chain Smoker

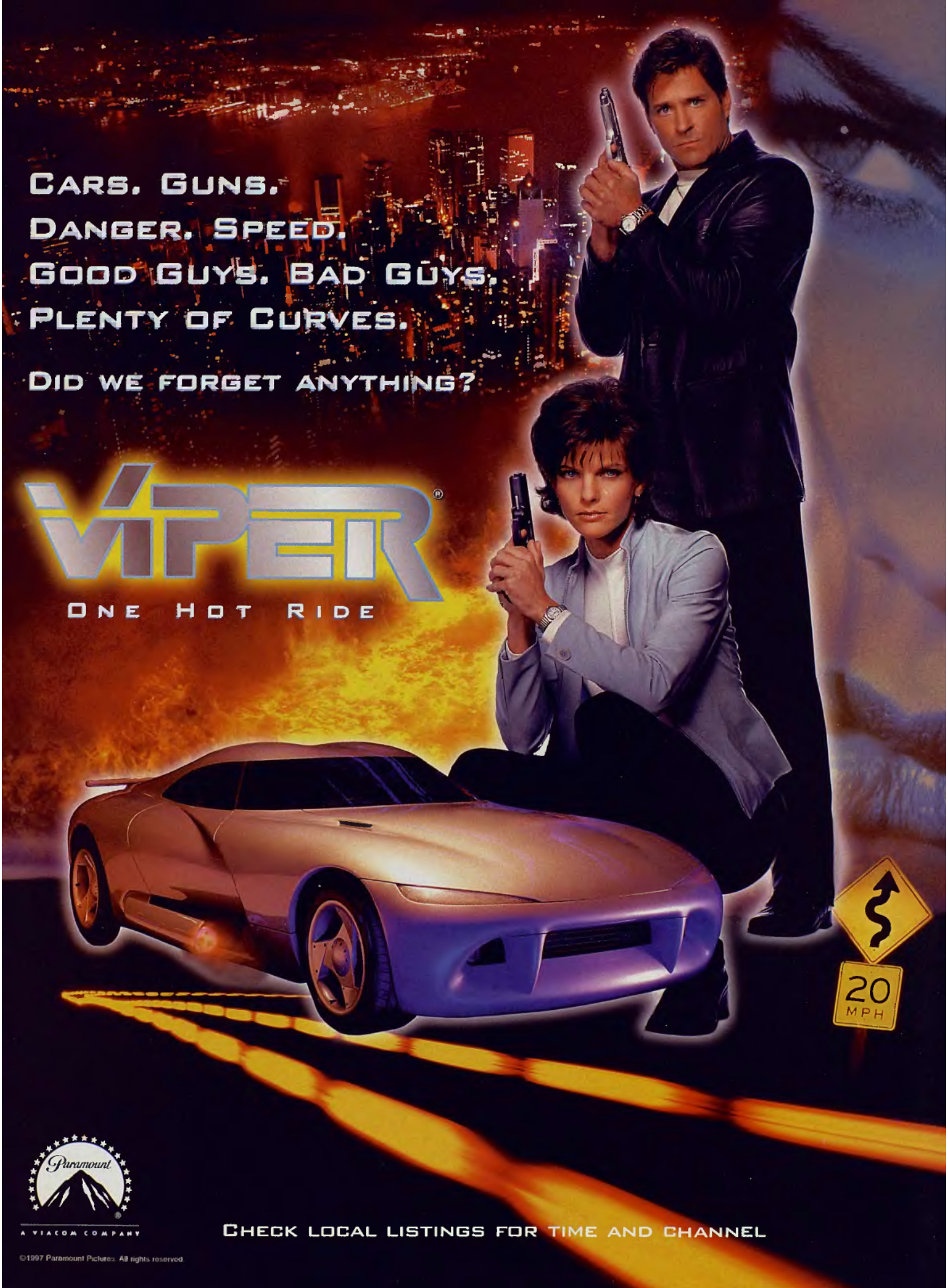
Porsche brings its expertise to the road again in the form of two high-performance mountain bikes, Bike S (suspension, shown here) and Bike FS (full suspension). Handbuilt by Vortec (a company with plenty of motorcycle savvy), the bikes have hydraulic brakes, strong—yet light—frames and long-travel front forks (the FS has long-travel rear suspension as well). Prices: $2500 and $4500.

Steak, Bistro Style

Though we think of steak as prototypically American, the French seem to have an edge when it comes to cooking one, especially in their bistros. Among the many variations, this is our favorite. Put a medium-size (a pound or a pound and a half) flank steak in a shallow dish. Pour over it a tablespoon or so of both extra virgin olive oil and a good soy sauce. Season with freshly ground pepper and salt. Pierce the steak with a fork several times on both sides. Let marinate for half an hour. Heat a skillet (cast iron is good; one that is ribbed will also work) on high until a drop of water evaporates on contact. Sear the steak for 2½ minutes on one side, a minute or two on the other. Remember to turn off the smoke alarm; the cooking can produce quite a fog. Let the steak rest for at least ten minutes. This will allow the juices to be retained in the meat's fibers. Slice on the bias, and garnish with sautéed shallots and fresh parsley.

Linking Up With Luxury

The PGA National Resort and Spa in Palm Beach, Florida (just 15 miles from the airport) offers the best of two worlds—golf and leisure. There are five 18-hole tournament courses: the Champion (redesigned by Jack Nicklaus and the site of the annual PGA Seniors Championship), the General (which is about as Scottish as you can get this side of Saint Andrews), the Squire (a "thinking man's" course, which mixes up fairway woods with precise shots onto the greens), the Haig (for anyone, from novice to pro) and the Estate (the site of the PGA's Professional Winter Tournament Program). But you don't go to this resort just to putter around. Its 15,000-square-foot spa boasts a two-to-one staff-to-guest ratio and offers more than 100 pampering services, including haircuts, facials, body wraps and 13 different massages. (The sports massage is especially effective on sore muscles.) The soak pools (one is pictured at left) are infused with imported mineral salts, and there's a martini-and-cigar bar just off the putting green, to ensure that your body maintains a sinful equilibrium. (In addition to a well-stocked humidor, there are 12 kinds of martinis and a selection of vintage ports.) And if you want a break from the links, head to the tennis courts, croquet lawn or sailing lake. Call 800-633-9150 for details and reservations.



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MANTRACK

Fast Cash

As if an automated teller machine on every corner isn't enough to drain your bank account, Citibank and San Francisco–based VeriFone are introducing personal ATMs for the home. The machines dispense electronic cash (rather than the cold, hard variety) on "smart cards" that can be used at most establishments where credit cards are accepted. The personal ATM connects to your telephone, so you can call your bank to check balances, transfer funds between accounts and download e-cash. New Yorkers are getting the first crack at this technology, and Citibank plans a nationwide rollout later this year. The risk? The card is like real money. Losing it after making a $100 transfer is like dropping a C-note on the sidewalk.

How to Work a Hotel

You don't have to be a VIP to get special treatment. The key is to tip early and often. Give the doorman, the bellhop and the maid each $5 the first time you see them, whether or not you need extra attention. Make sure the concierge and the manager know your name—contrive some reason to consult them (about a jogging route, a future stay, whatever). Tip for each extra effort. Remember the names of staff members and call them by name at every opportunity. If you make them feel important, they'll do the same for you. Your fame will precede you.

Anasazi Getaway

There is no wrong time to go to Santa Fe. The high desert climate is interesting during any season, and the town itself is still a quirky delight, despite its growing popularity. But what makes Santa Fe a great getaway destination is the Inn of the Anasazi, an intimate luxury hotel in the heart of the historic and cultural center of town. The 51 guest rooms and eight suites all have kiva fireplaces, and the furniture is handcrafted in the region. The rooms themselves are designed in traditional Santa Fe style: vigas and latillas form the beam-and-pole ceilings. The effect is stunningly cozy. Additionally, on-staff guides can escort guests to the Anasazi ruins or the eight pueblos nearby. Gallery and museum tours are available as well. Santa Fe is known for its competitive dining environment, and the inn's own restaurant, presided over by executive chef Flynt Payne, is among the finest in town.

Coveted Cohiba

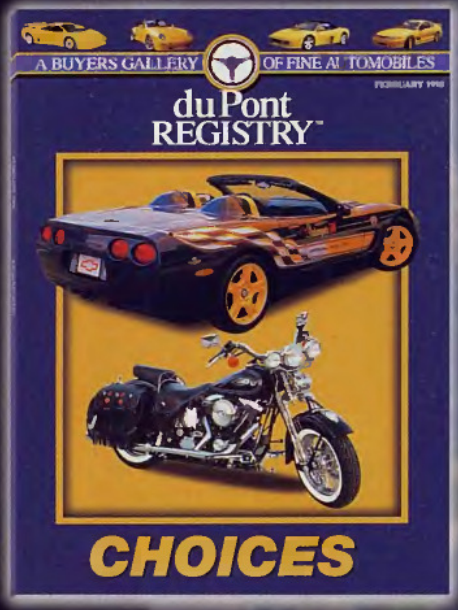
Identical brand names have been a problem in the cigar industry since manufacturers fled Cuba after Fidel Castro's takeover. Although company owners took the brand names with them, Castro kept making the cigars. That's why we have dual-nationality Partagas, Upmann and Punch brands, for example. In 1968 Castro introduced an exceptional cigar, the Cohiba, and for years the only way you could get one was from Castro himself or from someone in his inner circle. Now there's a new Cohiba that's hand-rolled in the Dominican Republic. Its Cuban-seed filler, Indonesian binder and Cameroon wrapper make it a sophisticated smoke, available in nine sizes, priced from about $7 to $15. Sorry, Fidel, it's not available in Cuba.

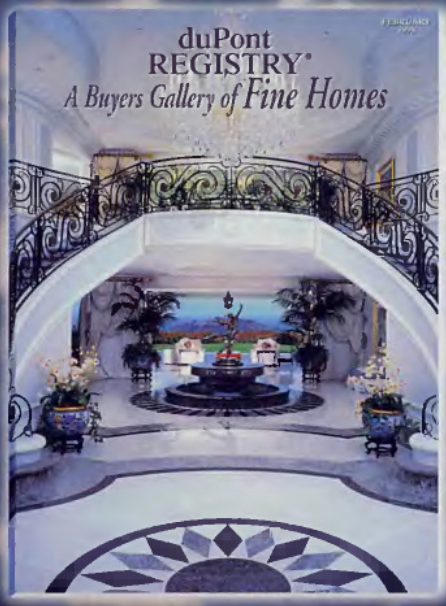
Babe Magnets

Changing your prescription lenses to sunglasses is a snap, thanks to a line of magnetic frames from Takumi. Designed by fashion photographer Ira Lerner and worn by such Hollywood heavyweights as Steven Spielberg, Michelle Pfeiffer, Bruce Willis and John Travolta, the frames contain magnets that secure sunshades coated for protection from both UV-A and UV-B rays. About 30 styles are available (#871 is shown here) in both men's and women's versions. The frames cost $350 to $400, in eyewear stores.

WHERE & HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 150.

DREAM WORLD





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BJULDRM

THE PLAYBOY ADVISOR

My boyfriend almost always wakes up with an erection. When I ask him why, he says he's been dreaming about me. I'm not that gullible. Is there a medical reason for morning erections?—M.B., Birmingham, Alabama

Of course he's dreaming about you. Or he may be dreaming about red pickup trucks, fresh artichokes, being chased by Roseanne or going to class in his underwear. Regardless of what's on his mind, every healthy male experiences spontaneous, involuntary erections as he dreams. They occur every 90 minutes or so during the dream stage of sleep. Scientists aren't certain why sleep erections occur, but one prevailing theory is that they are a natural systems check or some kind of exercise program to keep the penis in shape. A woman might interpret morning wood as an invitation for sex. That's a good instinct. But the guy's immediate thought is probably, How am I going to pee with this thing?

I've heard that wineries may not be able to meet demand for champagne at all the millennium parties. Should I be stocking up for my big bash?—R.J., Chattanooga, Tennessee

Unless you're buying prestige vintages from producers such as Krug, Bollinger or Roederer, you have nothing to worry about. There are currently a billion bottles in reserve, with another 250 million produced each year to satisfy world demand. If you want the best, stock up now. Look for vintages from 1988, 1989 and 1990, which may be harder to find by the end of next year.

In November you asked if a Lava lamp had ever helped anyone score. A few years ago I had a blind date. We hit it off at dinner, so she came back to my place for drinks. I was giving her a tour of my pad when she commented on the red Lava lamp from the early Seventies that I keep in my bedroom. A few minutes later, when I asked if she wanted to watch *Saturday Night Live*, she said, "Let's watch the Lava lamp instead." We stared at the lamp and chatted about our college days. Then she began to rub my shoulders. Before long we had our shirts off. Soon after that, I was facing the lamp with her underneath me. It was as erotic as doing it by a fireplace. For our next date, I'm going to dig out my Pet Rock.—K.R., Lincoln, Nebraska

Some things never change.

For some reason I keep hearing a radio station on my stereo, which doesn't have a tuner. When I turn up the volume with nothing else playing, I hear a DJ. When I listen to quiet songs on my CD player, I hear the radio in the background. Is there a fix?—T.R., Seattle, Washington

The culprit may be the connection between your amplifier and CD player. Make sure the cable is shielded. Sometimes the fix is as simple as changing the position of your power cord, which can act as an antenna. Coil it or reposition it. The problem could also be the electrical cabling in your walls. You may be able to banish the DJ with a line conditioner, available at computer hardware stores. It resembles a surge protector.

All my past lovers have said they didn't like the bitter or salty taste of my semen. When I asked my current girlfriend about this, she said my semen didn't taste like anything. Could it be that some women are more aware of the taste than others? After all, some people like broccoli and some don't.—R.W., Colorado Springs, Colorado

Perhaps. Researchers have documented differences in the sense of taste. In one study, scientists asked test subjects to place a bitter synthetic chemical on their tongues. A quarter of the people tasted nothing. Half said it tasted bitter. A quarter found it so bitter they retched. The last group are "supertasters"—men and women who have a large number of taste buds (as many as 1100 per square centimeter of tongue). For a supertaster, frosting tastes too sweet, coffee is too bitter and alcohol too sharp. Supertasters don't like the feel of oil or fat on their tongues, and they dislike salty or spicy foods. Women are more likely to be supertasters—about 35 percent of Caucasian women fall into the category, compared with ten percent of white men.

What are the odds that one will get AIDS?—R.T., Boston, Massachusetts

We could give you numbers, but they wouldn't mean much. As one AIDS expert pointed out in an online discussion group, "The risk of HIV transmission is not like the risk of losing at the races. Because you can't recoup the loss represented by infection, you can't think of the odds in the same way." Instead, let's talk about high-risk activities. People most at risk of acquiring HIV, the virus that leads to AIDS, are those who have condomless anal sex with an infected person, and people who share a needle with an infected person while injecting drugs. In the U.S., those groups account for the vast majority of AIDS deaths. There is also risk if you have unprotected vaginal or oral sex with an infected person. HIV is spread sexually when the blood or semen of an infected person makes contact with a cut or sore or mucous membrane of a partner. The use of condoms and other barriers should prevent this. Since it's impossible to tell if a partner has HIV (people lie), even if you've been together a long time (people cheat), you have to make certain uncomfortable assumptions. At the same time, no one wants to have sex with plastic for the rest of their life, and people take what they consider acceptable risks.

Our marriage needs a kick in the romance department, so I'd like to spirit my husband away for a weekend. He seems reluctant. It's not that he wouldn't like some time away, but I think he sees a "romantic" weekend as too much work. Do you have any suggestions?—W.S., Fort Wayne, Indiana

Don't pitch it as a romantic weekend. It's a weekend away, together, that may turn out to be romantic. If your husband is reluctant, book a hot spot yourself and tell him all he has to do is show up. If it's a hit, he can take care of the next one. In "The Great Sex Weekend," a guide for the busy or bored, Pepper Schwartz and Janet Lever include a list of big-city hotels in the U.S. and Canada suggested in part by couples who helped research the book. (The authors recommend you avoid remote cabins and intimate bed-and-breakfasts, which may sound like places where people have great sex but are often not.) Reserve a room with an oversize or whirlpool bathtub, a bar-refrigerator, pay-per-view movies, a king-size bed and a view other than the parking lot. Take along a Happy Massager (800-421-1223) or a Hitachi Magic Wand. Finally, play hands-off the week before to build anticipation.

I've noticed rust on the bottoms of the doors of my car. The rest of the steel is in great shape. What's causing the doors to rust?—T.B., Chicago, Illinois

You have puddles. Check the bottoms of your doors. If you have drain plugs, pop them out with a screwdriver—water from snow and rain is collecting there. If you

ILLUSTRATION BY ISTVAN BANYAI

don't have plugs, make sure the drain holes aren't clogged. In some vehicles, the plugs are beneath the moldings.

After reading the letters concerning fellatio over the past few months, it's hard to believe so many women have hang-ups about oral sex. I figure I have had sex with about 100 women. Only two refused to give me a blow job. Maybe four weren't crazy about it. Eight were positively obsessed. The rest treated it as a natural part of sex. Many seemed to enjoy the power of fellatio because it gave me so much pleasure. Only one woman enjoyed the 69 position; the others preferred to concentrate on what they were doing. While this is only one man's experience, the sample is large and the period lengthy (I first had sex at 16 and didn't marry until 35). Is my experience out of the ordinary?—T.R., Salem, Oregon

It sounds fairly typical—if not in quantity then in percentages. Most women don't have hang-ups about oral sex—we just don't hear from the guys they're with. Years ago, the "Playboy Readers' Sex Survey" found that women who avoided oral sex were three times as likely to view themselves as poor lovers. You sound like a confident guy who dated confident women. That confidence carried into the bedroom.

I've been following the letters from readers whose wives or girlfriends don't let them come in their mouths. I had a similar experience. Just as I was about to come, my girlfriend would take my erection out of her mouth and finish me off with her hand. Then one day I was giving her cunnilingus and just as she was about to come, I pulled my head back and finished her with my finger. When she asked me why I did that, I looked at her, smiled and said, "Just something I picked up." Things have been fine ever since.—D.T., New Haven, Connecticut

Who says women can't learn anything from guys?

My girlfriend says she has an orgasm whenever we have sex, but I'm not sure I believe her. I can feel the tension building in her body as I touch or lick her, but then she'll let out a sigh and that's it. All my past girlfriends had more animated reactions. Is she telling the truth?—R.W., Seattle, Washington

Who would fake an orgasm by sighing? Not every woman acts possessed when she comes—many describe the experience as a gentle release. The same is true of men. Surely you've had an orgasm that arrived more like a sailboat than a train. To some extent we've been corrupted by movies that show couples banging on tables, gasping for breath, calling to the heavens and screaming for relief before bodily fluids squirt all over plywood sets. For a few women, climax can be so subtle they miss it. Sex therapists William Hartman and Marilyn Fithian once observed 20 women who claimed they couldn't climax. Based on measurements of the women's heart rates, pelvic contractions and other physiological indicators, Hartman and Fithian determined the women were having orgasms but didn't realize it. There was a happy ending. The therapists were able to teach all the women but one to recognize the sensations on their own.

I went to a great party with some of my girlfriends. By the end of the night we were all talking about sex—great sexual experiences, the strangest places we'd had sex, the wildest food we'd ever taken into the bedroom. I was telling this guy how much I loved whipped cream, honey and chocolate syrup, and he asked, "Have you ever tried peaches?" He went into the kitchen and opened a can of peach quarters. He told me to close my eyes and then rubbed one on my arm. I shivered, imagining what that would feel like between my legs. Have you ever heard of this?—T.R., Providence, Rhode Island

You mean peaches as sex toys, or guys who use peaches to pick up women at parties?

Early on in the Bill Clinton–Paula Jones legal tiff, there was talk that the president had "a distinguishing characteristic in his genital area." Then it came out that the characteristic was a bend in his penis. Clinton's lawyer said the president wasn't bent, that he was a "normal man." I took some offense at that, since I've had a slight bend in my penis for as long as I can remember. Urologists who were interviewed by the media said there might be no way to tell now if the president was bent in 1991, when he met Jones. Why not? Is it supposed to straighten out?—J.T., Washington, D.C.

It might if you're suffering from Peyronie's disease, which is a painful disorder often caused by a trauma to the penis. Some cases may also be hereditary. If you've never experienced pain or discomfort, your slight curve is natural. (No penis is a ruler.) Peyronie's usually runs its course without treatment, so in six years the president's penis may have straightened. If it was ever bent. Not that we care.

I've been asked by a friend to be godfather to his daughter. I've accepted, but what are my responsibilities?—R.R., Dayton, Ohio

You are charged with assisting in the child's intellectual and spiritual growth, which often comes down to being there if you're needed. You participate in her christening or baptism, confirmation and first Communion. Some godparents send birthday and holiday cards and occasional encouraging notes or gifts. You have no legal obligation to provide financial assistance or adopt your godchild if the situation becomes dire—relatives fulfill that role.

A Jewish friend was reciting all the Yiddish words that he knows for penis: schmuck, putz, *shvantz*, schlong, etc. But he said there was no word in Yiddish for vulva. That's hard to believe. Do you know one?—R.S., New York, New York

There's no widely used word, but that doesn't mean you can't get your point across. In an essay in "The Ecstatic Moment," an anthology of writing from "Libido" magazine, Albert Stern describes his quest for the word after his gentile girlfriend asked about it. Stern spoke to elderly Jews who suggested slang such as loch, pirgeh, shmoonke, shmushka and shtalt. A professor of Yiddish offered oysemoken ("that place"), dos vayberifher ("the female part") and die mayse ("the story"). Stern found these choices decidedly unerotic and vague, but what can you do? Barbara Kligman, editor of "Plotz" ($2 to Box 819, Stuyvesant Station, New York, New York 10009, or www.flotsam.com/plotz), reports that many of the women she grew up with referred to the vulva as a knish. Sounds delicious.

As a birthday gift last year, my then-girlfriend gave me erotic photos of herself. She made me promise never to show them to anyone, and I never have. We had a bad breakup, and now she wants them back. A friend who is a lawyer says I have no legal obligation to return them since they were a gift. I want to do the right thing but would like to keep them as mementos of our relationship. Despite how things turned out, I have good memories of our time together. What should I do?—S.W., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Keep your memories and return the photos. If you miss the photographs more than you miss her, you didn't have a relationship worth remembering.

All reasonable questions—from fashion, food and drink, stereo and sports cars to dating dilemmas, taste and etiquette—will be personally answered if the writer includes a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The most provocative, pertinent questions will be presented in these pages each month. Write the Playboy Advisor, PLAYBOY, *680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611, or advisor@playboy.com (because of volume, we cannot respond to all e-mail inquiries). Look for responses to our most frequently asked questions at www.playboy.com/faq, and check out the Advisor's latest collection of sex tricks, "365 Ways to Improve Your Sex Life" (Plume), available in bookstores or by phoning 800-423-9494.*

HOW DO YOU RATE?

censoring the web one page at a time

By CHIP ROWE

Come and get it! The Internet won't be unfettered for long. Last fall, Senator Dan Coats (R–Ind.), one of the original sponsors of the Communications Decency Act, returned for round two. The original CDA outlawed "indecent" material anywhere on the Net. Coats' new-and-improved version targets for-profit Web sites, requiring that they bar anyone 17 or younger from seeing images that might "harm" them. Violators would face up to six months in jail and a $50,000 fine.

The introduction of "son of CDA" wasn't a surprise to anyone, given the tenacity of the enemies of free speech. To fend off Congress, the captains of the online industry made a goodwill gesture: a campaign that could lead to all but mandating Web site owners to rate their pages. Big business joined the White House on the self-censorship bandwagon because it hopes ratings will make the Net a more friendly, cozy place—sort of like the mall. (Don't forget your credit card.)

Here's how it would work: A Web site owner would visit an online ratings guide and answer questions such as "Do you have profanity?" and "Do you have nudity?" The owner would then be given a code to place on his or her pages that spells out the rating. Concerned parents or prudes could set their Web browsers or filters to block access to sites that rate too high on nudity, profanity, violence, anti-Christian sentiment or whatever other evil they choose.

So what's the big deal? If you decline to rate, your site could disappear from the radar. The major search engines and online directories have made noises that they might not list unrated sites, or may push them down in search results. Netscape and Microsoft have agreed to add "family-friendly" controls to their popular browsing software. If activated by a user, these controls would block not only adult sites but also any site that declined to rate. More ominously, under proposals being bandied around Capitol Hill, you could be fined or jailed if you were to rate your site too liberally. A proposal introduced by Senator Patty Murray (D–Wash.) would create criminal penalties for misrating. The company behind one major rating system, Safe Surf, is lobbying for a similar law that would also allow parents to sue anyone who "negligently" misrates his or her site. Safe Surf, which describes its purpose as "protecting the innocence of children," calls its proposal the Online Cooperative Publishing Act. (Because censorship is such a loaded word, doublespeak surrounds the issue of ratings. Safe Surf says it "uses filters, not censorship" to block sites. Another favored euphemism is "cooperative self-regulation.")

One critic neatly summarizes the whole affair as "privatized censorship disguised as consumer information backed by government coercion."

The inherent problem of rating systems is the same as that of the filtering software being pushed on libraries: They ask pointed questions but provide vague answers. You need only rate a site to learn how pointless self-censorship can be. Safe Surf asks Web masters to consider a long list of fuzzy definitions. Are the "heterosexual themes" at your site "subtly implied through the use of metaphor," or are they presented as "non-graphic artistic"? Do you make "casual use of expletives" or are they well considered? Is that nude woman "artistic," "erotic" or "pornographic"? Gay people have a category all their own, evidently because Safe Surf believes they're more dangerous than heterosexuals.

Another self-rating system, the nonprofit Recreational Software Advisory Council, modified its video-game ratings for cyberspace. Like Safe Surf's, the RSAC's criteria are soft around the edges. With mandatory ratings, that becomes your problem. As its language guidelines note: "Times change. Street slang is constantly evolving. Language considered inoffensive in one culture may be considered vulgar in another. It is therefore your responsibility to properly interpret and classify any slang, profanity or vulgarity." In other words, language that isn't on the RSAC list but should be is considered to be on the list. Got that?

The violence guidelines are just as vague. Does your site contain "inten-

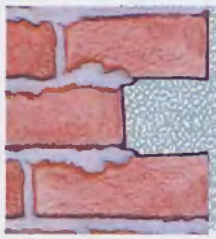
tional, aggressive" violence or the "wanton, gratuitous" variety? According to the RSAC, wanton, gratuitous violence is "the visual portrayal of the continuation of intentional aggressive violence that causes damage/harm/death to any sentient being once that being has been rendered helpless and/or nonthreatening, such as physical torture, continued attacks on or damage to corpses, dismembering or eating a corpse." Ouch. Note: Competitive sports such as football and sumo wrestling are not intentional aggressive violence unless the goal is to hurt the opponent, or to eat him.

If your rival is wearing Lycra, you have other problems. Under RSAC standards, nudity includes "clothing that emphasizes the genitalia, female nipples or breasts (including the display of cleavage that is more than one half of the possible length of the cleavage), or clothing on a male or female which a reasonable person would consider to be sexually suggestive and alluring." Does this same standard apply in Ontario, where women can legally stroll topless in public? An exception is made for the exposed buttocks of any creature "whose natural state is undressed." Since we are born nude, isn't that our natural state?

In its guidelines for sexual content, the RSAC asks Web masters to distinguish between "passionate" kissing and "innocent" kissing. What's the difference? Tongue, basically, or kissing anywhere but on the face. (Don't worry, a jury of your peers will figure it out.) "Explicit sexual acts" include "any portrayal of sexual activity that a reasonable person would consider as more than just nonexplicit sexual activity because it does show genitalia." "Nonexplicit sexual acts" include "any portrayal of sexual activity that a reasonable person would consider as more than just clothed sexual touching or nonexplicit sexual touching that may show nudity but does not show genitalia." In other words, explicit sex is where you can see everything; nonexplicit sex is where you wish you could see everything.

Finally, back to language. Words that must be shielded include "crude language" (fuck, bugger, cocksucker, penis-breath), "strong language" (asshole, butthole, dork, dick, shit, cum, asswipe, jerk-off, schtupping, boffing) and any references to genitalia. (Message: Penises and vaginas are bad.) Approved words are darn, drat, gee whiz, golly and gosh.

Whew! Censorship is hard work.



FILTERING

By CHIP ROWE

When the mayor of Boston heard that teenagers were accessing pornographic Web sites at the city library, he was outraged. He demanded that the Boston Public Library and its 25 branches install software that would block sex and other dangerous ideas. The local police even placed a friendly call to the library staff to express their concern. Within 48 hours, the city had spent $1250 on 250 copies of Cyber Patrol. Officials in Seattle, Orlando, Pittsburgh, Salt Lake City, Jacksonville, Florida and Loudoun County, Virginia have taken similar action.

Filtering software can be helpful to parents who want to maintain some control over what their children see online at home. But when public libraries begin installing filters, it becomes censorware and violates the First Amendment. Members of the religious right don't have a problem with that—they'll endorse anything that promises to protect them from "bad" ideas. Computers can turn on our lights—why can't they raise our kids?

Anyone who has toyed with filtering software knows the truth. Not only does it attempt the impossible, but it also shares the shortcomings of human censors—narrow vision and broad brushes. In Boston, the libraries' censorware is installed on computers in the children's and young adults' sections to block sites that show nudity or sex. Sites that contain violence or profanity, or that mention booze, tobacco, drugs, drug culture or cults are not blocked. The result: a generation of Bostonians who have never seen anyone naked but have a desire to get drunk, beat people up, cuss, smoke dope and join clubs.

Consumer Reports tested four popular filters and revealed that some easy-to-find adult sites slipped through every one. At the same time, the magazine noted that none of the filters blocked access to a color photo of an aborted fetus on the Operation Rescue site. No doubt that image would give a child nightmares long before he'd wake up screaming about porn stars.

As a practical matter, censorware in libraries makes online research more difficult. In response to the situation in Boston, a team of about 40 reference librarians tested 12 filters. They came up with 104 requests that might be made, or had been made, by knowledge-starved patrons. These include:

- Is there anything on the Web about the play *Playboy of the Western World*?
- What are the best methods for finding wall studs?
- In what poem did Robert Frost write, "my little horse must think it queer"?
- I want to research rape, the plant used to make canola oil.
- Is the Aryan Nation the same thing as the Nazis?

The team found that more than one third of the time, censorware blocked information needed to answer a question. Filters blocked nursery rhymes ("pussycat, pussycat"), government physics archives (the address began with XXX) and the word button. One filter prevented a librarian from reading a brochure on the dangers of cocaine but allowed access to a site that described how to make the drug.

Sex proved to be the most difficult topic to research. Only 64 percent of the questions about sex could be answered, compared with 80 to 90 percent of the others.

That's no surprise to anyone who has seen filtering programs in action. They epitomize overkill. Cyber Patrol, now installed in Boston, claims to block 3 million Web pages. Like all filtering software, its blacklist of banned keywords and sites changes with each update. But when I took it for a test drive recently, it prevented me from using search terms such as fuck, or many other words that include "uck" (with the notable exception of duck). If Cyber Patrol is operating and you type f-u-c-k into a search engine, an e-mail message or a document, the program reaches out its steely hand and converts the word to XXXX on your screen. That way, the word won't corrupt you for

OUT "BAD" IDEAS

censorware comes to libraries

longer than you take to type it.

At its default settings, Cyber Patrol would not allow a search for any word that includes "sex," including Middlesex, Essex or Anne Sexton. It restricted a search for penis but not vagina. It blocked the introductory page of the Safer Sex site, which answers the question, "What is safer sex?" Until recently it hid only a few pages of the Critical Path AIDS site—the ones that described how not to get the virus. At Planned Parenthood, it shuttered the "Sexuality Guides for Families" but not information on birth control or abortion. It blocked the personals ads in the *Jewish Bulletin*. It didn't block sites such as godhatesfags.com, or the American Family Association or any of the hate sites we've featured in *Web Sites of the Weird*. This despite promises to filter out intolerance.

PETER PALOMBI

The most reactionary of the filtering programs, Cybersitter, blocked keyword searches for "anarchy," "violence" and "gay." It hid the National Organization for Women and the International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission. It even blocked sites maintained by its critics that don't contain porn or adult language. The most notable is the antifilter guide at peacefire.org.

Net Nanny is less energetic but just as goofy. It filtered NOW, the Queer Resource Directory and a site created by a candy maker (www.smarties.com). The program also restricted a handful of search terms, including anarchy, bombs, drugs, erotic and "beastility," which must provide quite an education for the kids who can spell bad words as well as say them.

This is the software we trust to protect the children?

Lately the filter vendors have begun a game of one-upmanship. ImageCensor claims it can analyze the hues and color composition of photographs to determine if they show prurient flesh. Its Web page reads like a CIA manual: "Once ImageCensor detects an explicit image, a variety of actions can be taken. ImageCensor can capture the current application window and store it in the ImageCensor log, where it can be viewed later and used as evidence. If the program is running on a network, the name of the user can be recorded along with the image. In situations where use of the computer is partly supervised—a classroom, for example—the program can sound a short alarm to alert the supervisor. Once pornographic images have been detected, the user can be prevented from using the system until the correct password is entered. Even rebooting won't help; the system is locked again as Windows starts."

Its creators claim that ImageCensor is 95 percent accurate in detecting pornography (95 percent seems to be the benchmark for effectiveness in the censorware business). Since it knows it when it sees it, perhaps the Supreme Court would be interested in a test drive.

The latest filtering program is X-Stop, which recently received the enthusiastic endorsement of the American Family Association (so you can be sure it's good). The president of the company that makes X-Stop, Ogden Michael Forbes, boasts that its "16 pornography solution devices" not only block hard-core sex but also prevent the typing of objectionable words in several languages, allowing for only "wholesome" searches. The porno detectors have helped the company compile what it claims is "the most complete library of porn, dangerous and offensive sites" in the world. X-Stop could well be in the wrong business.

The danger of filtering software is that you have no way of knowing what you're missing, or who took it, or why. And it may be coming to a public library near you.

READER

SERVING TIME

James Bovard's "Time Out for Justice" (*The Playboy Forum*, December) engenders the same shock and outrage I might feel after reading about some poor schmuck being stoned in a market in Yemen for stealing a sheep, or the Chinese government running tanks over a crowd of people, or a godawful war crime involving battery acid in Bosnia. The major difference is that the events Bovard describes are happening within driving distance of my home.

After reading the article, I must conclude that your nation took a wrong turn at some important historical point. I was vaguely aware of the antidrug hysteria washing over our southern neighbor, but the reality didn't strike home until I read about the monstrous, inhumane jail terms being passed out for possessing, dealing or even thinking about marijuana. What a disgraceful waste.

Canadians have a number of national concerns that we consider much more serious than smoking a little dope. I don't think simple possession of marijuana has ever been considered more than a misdemeanor in any jurisdiction in this country. And, though our courts have handed out significant sentences for growing and dealing the stuff, I don't believe any sentence involving any amount of marijuana has exceeded five years.

I am not a proponent of dope smoking, but the issues raised in Bovard's article transcend the rightness or wrongness of consuming marijuana for pleasure or any other reason. Obviously, you are being ground in the coils of some antidrug pogrom designed to sacrifice what will soon be a few million innocent citizens so some politicians can appear to be tough on crime.

Robert Carr
Regina, Saskatchewan

Bovard's article points out the inadequacy of sentencing guidelines as they pertain to marijuana. But what about other drug offenses? I have been in federal prison for nearly eight years for possessing 72 grams of LSD. When I was sentenced, I was 18 years old and a first-time offender. Some years later, the 72 grams was reduced to 42 grams because the court acknowledged that the glass vials in which some of the LSD was contained should not have been weighed.

In the early Nineties LSD offenders garnered considerable support from the media toward changing the way LSD is weighed when determining an offender's sentence. That campaign was somewhat successful: On November 1, 1993 the U.S. Sentencing Commission amended the guidelines so the severity of the offense would be determined by dosage, not overall weight. Unfortunately, the change has little effect on the statutes that determine minimum mandatory sentences. My current sentence of ten years and one month will be reduced by one month, hardly the great change hoped for in 1993. There is little likelihood of any changes being made in time to affect my sentence, but I want to reopen the LSD-carrier issue for those who still suffer unjustly long sentences.

Marcus Taylor
Yazoo, Mississippi

I've been a PLAYBOY subscriber for three years, and nothing frustrates me more than not being able to do anything about the startling injustices that take place in our country. I suggest that PLAYBOY include information at the end of *Forum* articles on how citizens can take action. I want to become a part of some organized effort to lobby for changes in the judicial system. Writing a letter to my congressman seems pretty useless.

F. Craig Littlejohn
Worcester, Massachusetts

Families Against Mandatory Minimums wants to hear from you. Contact FAMM at 1612 K Street, NW, Suite 1400, Washington, D.C. 20006, 202-822-6700 or 202-822-6704 (fax).

Thank you for exposing the political nature of the war on drugs. Prohibition has created an enormously profitable underground distribution system for so-called controlled substances. We spend billions every year to enforce prohibition, but we haven't kept these drugs away from our children, nor made our communities safe from crime. Let's create a system that works.

Arthur Livermore
Arch Cape, Oregon

As a Canadian neighbor and longtime observer of your country's official war on (some) drugs, I'm encouraged by Bovard's excellent article. Any participant in the mainstream media who has the guts to address this issue with

DAVID P. CUTTER

FOR THE RECORD

HANDLE WITH CARE

"I have friends who are unable to have sex unless they tell themselves they are madly in love with the women they bed. The hypocrisy of this enrages me. I don't see why I should pledge eternal love when all I want is some exercise in the sheets. It's blackmail. No wonder straight men get so angry at women who think a hard-on is a handle you grab to lead a man to the altar. I'd rather pay cash for sex than be awakened by a distraught phone call from a woman who expected me to marry her just because I spent a few hours figuring out how to make her come. And she has the nerve to accuse *me* of using *her*!"

—PAT CALIFIA, JOURNALIST, FROM HER BOOK *Public Sex: The Culture of Radical Sex* (CLEIS PRESS), A COLLECTION OF 15 YEARS' WORTH OF ESSAYS AGAINST SEXUAL REPRESSION AND CENSORSHIP

more light than heat deserves our thanks. Please keep up the good work.

David Cull
Burlington, Ontario

PUBLIC TV'S PUBIC PROBLEM

I am writing to PLAYBOY concerning *Storyville: The Naked Dance*, a documentary about New Orleans' legal, turn-of-the-century red-light district. The documentary was funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting through the Independent Television Service, as well as by arts and humanities councils. Unfortunately, you probably won't get a chance to see this film, because the nudity in *Storyville* is a problem for PBS and its affiliate stations. If you were to watch history programs on PBS these days, you might think we are defined by only our wars and our presidents. But Storyville was as much a part of America as apple pie. To look at Storyville is to see how we attempt to define our sexual morality, our greed, our pleasure.

The Independent Television Service has requested that each station be allowed to blur the "offensive" sections of the film or to create a version of the documentary that conceals the most offensive photographs. The vast majority of photos of prostitutes in the documentary are in pornographic collections (although Ernest Bellocq's photos hang in the Museum of Modern Art). Combined, they are the last remnants of this important juncture in American history. It is impossible without these photos to make a film about Storyville that confronts prostitution with honesty and integrity.

As we struggle to get *Storyville: The Naked Dance* broadcast, graphic and gratuitous violence fills our television screens. As one of the documentary's producers, I feel that altering the film is blatant, unjustifiable and unacceptable censorship. Frankly, it makes no sense. Given the nature of the film and its topic, some stations will simply refuse to air the show. That paternalism robs us not only of our history but also of our ability to confront issues that affect our culture. Is it really the naked truth we don't want to see?

Anne Craig
New York, New York

COVENANT MARRIAGE

Following Louisiana's lead, Michigan's state legislature will consider its own version of a more binding marriage contract ("Covenant Marriage," *The Playboy Forum*, December). Covenant marriage is the latest sexually oriented proposal by far-right activists in Michigan. It follows efforts to raise the legal age of sexual consent from 16 to 18 and to repeal the current no-fault divorce laws. (Often questioned is the motivation of Michigan's conservative leadership, many of whom are themselves divorced—including Governor John Engler.) If Michigan is to be a Noah's ark of covenant marriage, it needs a worthy menu of marriages. I suggest the following: covenant romantic marriage, in which the wife is placed on a pedestal and the husband devotes his every thought and breath to her happiness, even going so far as to share in the housework; covenant gay marriage, in which same-sex couples cannot divorce unless they are incarcerated for having married; covenant S&M marriage, in which couples cannot divorce unless they fail to abuse each other.

Louis Meldman
Birmingham, Michigan

HITLER YOUTH

I never dreamed I'd see an article in the *Forum* like James Bovard's "The Return of the Hitler Youth?" (*The Playboy Forum*, November). Welcome to the real world, PLAYBOY! You're beginning to realize that we right-wingers were right when we said we couldn't trust Clinton, that he was unprincipled, a liar, a hypocrite, a closet totalitarian, etc. But you voted him into office. You probably gave the Democrats a contribution, too (did you enjoy your stay in the Lincoln bedroom?). Well, enjoy the man as he sends the country down the tubes. Don't say you weren't warned.

Paul Alexander
La Grange, Georgia

FORUM F.Y.I.

FROCKING AROUND

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms knows no bounds when it comes to imposing standards and violating works of art in the name of decency. Belgian artist Raymond Coumans created a beer label portraying Gambrinus, the mythic king of beer, in the company of a nude woman. Under its proscription against "indecent or obscene" depictions on the labels of alcoholic beverages, the BATF disallowed the design (below left). Coumans promptly draped her in a blue frock (below right), but not before passing on the following message: "Tell your client that underneath her blue dress the girl is . . . stark naked." Order the beer at 800-481-4848.

FORUM

As a public school teacher for 28 years, I take great offense at Bovard's "Hitler Youth" article. While I cannot disagree with the many issues he raises over the idea of mandatory volunteerism, I have a problem with his statement that "lousy public schools numb children's brains." Does Bovard know that public education has done more in recent years to improve the quality of education than ever before? The quality of teachers and public education in general has never been better. These days many parents do not help their kids with schoolwork. Most claim they don't have the time. Teachers are left with the responsibility of educating kids and being parents and counselors as well. I challenge you to teach a lesson to five, six or seven classes in one day. Then tell me if the youth of today are the same as those of even a decade ago.

Jeff Thomas
Dallastown, Pennsylvania

MILITARY MIGHT

As a military officer and a taxpayer, I take exception to "The Front Line" ("For the Record," *The Playboy Forum*, November) and the unidentified general's comment "If people are paying me to be a good officer and a leader, I'm confident I'm doing the job they want. If they are paying me to be a perfect person, that's a different matter."

No one expects anyone to be perfect. We expect our leaders to know the difference between right and wrong. If our leaders use bad judgment in their personal lives, why wouldn't they do the same in their professional lives? The question of leadership has nothing to do with accepting adultery. It has everything to do with a set of principles that guide us every day. Failure to live a principled life will lead to the ultimate breakdown of a unit's integrity. Once leaders demonstrate that it is acceptable to violate regulations or policies, unit members will follow.

General, I ask you: Are the principles of leadership something you can turn on and off? Does your conduct affect the rest of your unit? Is it acceptable for you to violate a regulation and punish someone else for the same action? As it has been stated countless times: If you are going to talk the talk, you must walk the walk.

Jim Johnson
Sacramento, California

BANGING THE DRUM

Robert S. Wieder's article "Banging the Drum for the Lord" (*The Playboy Forum*, December) is another attempt to associate Christianity with Soviet secret police–style raids on objectionable material.

I'm a Christian with a PLAYBOY subscription, though my Christian acquaintances might say that's an oxymoron. Isn't it just as narrow-minded for you to tar us all with the same brush? And I haven't even mentioned the fact that by calling those poseurs Christians, you give them undeserved legitimacy.

Richard Miller
Albion, New York

I write a media commentary column for the *Oklahoma Gazette*, Oklahoma City's weekly alternative newspaper. As soon as Tailgunner Bob Anderson took his antiporn crusade to local television, I began to review him. He and Oklahomans for Children and Families immediately accused me of writing all the anti-OCAF letters to the editor that began appearing in the *Gazette* and signing false names to them.

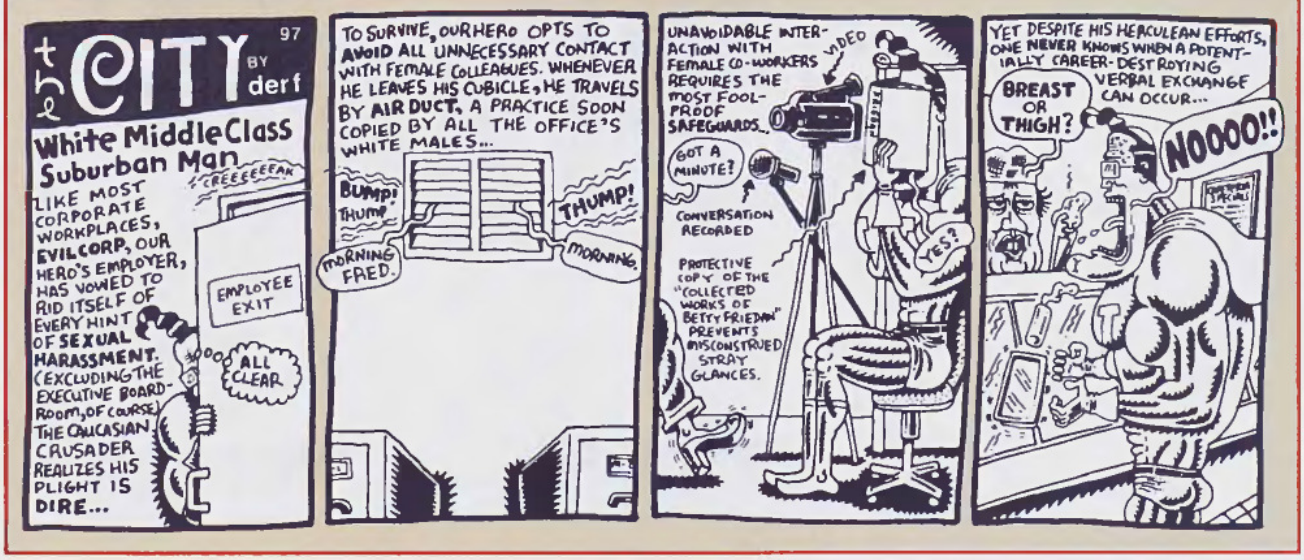
When the NBC newsmagazine program *Dateline* sent a crew to Oklahoma City to put together a story on the *Tin Drum* affair, including interviews with Anderson and Lee Brawner, the executive director of our public library system, they taped the Library Commission meeting where several OCAF members were scheduled to speak. OCAF did a nice job of shifting the topic away from German art cinema and back to the tired accusation that our public libraries are dens of iniquity second only to the Oklahoma University football dorms during the Barry Switzer era.

One of the OCAF kids spoke to the group, warning us that reading bad books makes students talk back to their teachers. A second supporter got up and said that if his daughter were ever raped, library books would have led the boy to believe rape was OK. Where will it all end?

Doug Bentin
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

We would like to hear your point of view. Send questions, opinions and quirky stuff to: The Playboy Forum Reader Response, PLAYBOY, 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611. Please include a daytime phone number. Fax number: 312-951-2939. E-mail: forum@playboy.com (please include your city and state).

CARTOONIST'S NOTEBOOK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97
BY derf
White Middle Class Suburban Man
LIKE MOST CORPORATE WORKPLACES, EVILCORP, OUR HERO'S EMPLOYER, HAS VOWED TO RID ITSELF OF EVERY HINT OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT. (EXCLUDING THE EXECUTIVE BOARDROOM, OF COURSE) THE CAUCASIAN CRUSADER REALIZES HIS PLIGHT IS DIRE...
CREEEEEEAK
EMPLOYEE EXIT
ALL CLEAR
TO SURVIVE, OUR HERO OPTS TO AVOID ALL UNNECESSARY CONTACT WITH FEMALE COLLEAGUES. WHENEVER HE LEAVES HIS CUBICLE, HE TRAVELS BY AIR DUCT, A PRACTICE SOON COPIED BY ALL THE OFFICE'S WHITE MALES...
BUMP! THUMP
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MORNING FRED.
MORNING.
UNAVOIDABLE INTERACTION WITH FEMALE CO-WORKERS REQUIRES THE MOST FOOLPROOF SAFEGUARDS...
VIDEO
GOT A MINUTE?
CONVERSATION RECORDED
YES?
PROTECTIVE COPY OF THE "COLLECTED WORKS OF BETTY FRIEDAN" PREVENTS MISCONSTRUED STRAY GLANCES.
YET DESPITE HIS HERCULEAN EFFORTS, ONE NEVER KNOWS WHEN A POTENTIALLY CAREER-DESTROYING VERBAL EXCHANGE CAN OCCUR...
BREAST OR THIGH?
NOOOO!!

HMH AWARDS

our first amendment heroes

Imagine our surprise a few weeks ago when, after we notified the winners of the Hugh M. Hefner First Amendment Awards, two associate superintendents from the San Francisco Unified School District wrote the Playboy Foundation to offer their regrets. "We believe that to accept an award, no matter how well intentioned, from a foundation which represents an adult magazine and adult products would represent a tacit endorsement of those products."

Why were we surprised? Because the school district hadn't won the award. It hadn't even been nominated. We were writing to let them know we had selected Katharine Swan, faculty advisor for the student newspaper at the district's Mission High School. In 1996 the new principal told Swan he wanted to approve articles before *West Wing* went to press. She refused. Her 16-member staff spent the year writing tough stories and editorials about the administration. That prompted meetings with the principal and pressure to tone down coverage. Officials went so far as to threaten reporters with suspension. Buoyed by Swan's support, the journalists refused to bend. Their devotion to the idea of a free press impressed us. Two students traveled with Swan to New York, where she accepted the award "on behalf of the First Amendment."

To San Francisco's bungling school bureaucrats: Maybe next year.

In 1997, for the first time, the Foundation honored institutions as well as individuals. The American Civil Liberties Union and the American Library Association shared an award for their work in defeating the Communications Decency Act. Until it was struck down last year by the U.S. Supreme Court, the CDA threatened to make "indecent" material illegal on the Internet. Steven Shapiro, legal director of the ACLU, and Judith Krug, director of the ALA's Office of Intellectual Freedom, cautioned the audience at the awards luncheon that the battle over free speech on the Net is not over. It has shifted to local and state governments and the online industry, which is rushing toward ratings systems. Krug was defiant: "Our job is to provide information and ideas. Librarians are not going to censor, and we are not going to censor ourselves."

Frederic Whitehurst also chose not to censor himself. The forensic chemist for the FBI blew the whistle on misconduct at the agency's crime lab. The lab provides analysis of evidence for federal court cases, including that of the Oklahoma City bombing. Shortly after he joined the lab in 1986, Whitehurst began complaining to his superiors that some of his colleagues withheld or mishandled evidence, falsified test results, lied under oath and generally did sloppy work. Last year the FBI placed Whitehurst on administrative leave despite a report by the Justice Department that verified many of his concerns. He is suing to get his job back. He donated his $5000 prize to the National Whistleblower Center.

The First Amendment guarantees us freedom of association. In 1995 Kelli Peterson and two friends organized the Gay/Straight Student Alliance at East High School in Salt Lake City. When Kelli asked permission for the group to meet on campus, the principal consulted the state attorney general's office for an opinion. It ruled that the club could meet under the Federal Equal Access Act. Sponsored by Senator Orrin Hatch, the act had been intended to allow Bible clubs to use school facilities. The Salt Lake City school board found itself in a bind. Its members wanted to banish the alliance but couldn't do so unless they shut out all noncurricular clubs. So that's what they did. The Utah legislature then passed a law requiring schools to deny access to clubs that promote illegal activity (sodomy is a crime in Utah). Kelli graduated in 1996 and is presently in college. There is still work to be done. Only three states—Connecticut, Massachusetts and Wisconsin—have laws specifically prohibiting discrimination against gay students.

Cecile Richards, daughter of former Texas governor Ann Richards, knows something about organizing. She founded the Texas Freedom Network and, later, the Texas Faith Network, to counter the politicking of the religious right. She mobilized clergy, parents and politicians to oppose efforts to rewrite textbooks, dumb down sex education and divert public funds to private religious schools. "It's about time the rest of us were as involved in politics as are the religious right," she said while accepting her award. She also noted the irony of a bumper sticker she had spotted on a neighbor's car. It read GOD, PROTECT ME FROM YOUR FOLLOWERS.

NEWSFRONT

what's happening in the sexual and social arenas

PUSHING BUTTONS

BUENOS AIRES—*The sponsor of a literary prize canceled the award ceremony after she learned that the plot of the winning novel centered on the scientific discovery of*

the clitoris. Amalia Lacroze de Fortabat, a cement heiress who funds a $15,000 prize for the best first novel by an Argentine, described author Federico Andahazi as a "Communist porn artist" after she learned more about his book. "El Anatomista" ("The Anatomist") quickly became a best-seller, prompting Doubleday to pay $200,000 for English-language rights. The novel fictionalizes the life of Mateo Colón, an Italian who documented the clitoris in the 16th century. According to Andahazi, Colón dubbed the organ "my sweet newly found land."

PROTECTING PRISONERS

EAST ST. LOUIS, ILLINOIS—*A federal jury ruled against an ex-con who sued prison officials because he acquired HIV while incarcerated. Michael Blucker said gang members raped him within days of his arrival at Menard Correctional Center, then forced him to be a prostitute and drug courier. The jury deadlocked on whether the head of the prison's internal investigations and Blucker's jailhouse psychiatrist were "deliberately indifferent" to the abuse.*

TORONTO, ONTARIO—*A Canadian judge refused to hand over three men accused of fraud because a U.S. prosecutor implied they would be raped in prison. During a television interview, an assistant U.S. attorney in Pennsylvania warned that any Canadian suspect resisting extradition could expect a long prison sentence as "the boyfriend of a very bad man."*

DOWN WITH TOPS

NORTH YORK, ONTARIO—*In 1991 police arrested a college student in Guelph who removed her shirt on a hot summer day. After a five-year legal battle, the Ontario Court of Appeals acquitted the woman, ruling that breasts are not indecent and that women may appear topless in public. In response, some residents formed a group called Keep Tops On and gathered 55,000 signatures in support of tougher laws against public nudity. They joined forces with an evangelical church, the Prayer Palace, which organized a rally of 3000 antibreast activists. A senior pastor told the crowd: "For a woman to bare her breasts in public is nothing but pornography. We are not going to see this devastation sweep across the land and involve my wife and my children."*

REEFER MADNESS

PHOENIX, ARIZONA—*The Drug Enforcement Administration ordered a California publisher to provide the names and addresses of Arizona residents who had purchased a book on marijuana cultivation. The owner of Ronin Publishing, which has distributed "Marijuana Hydroponics: High-Tech Water Culture" since 1987, told the agency she wouldn't honor the request, even if she had the names. In addition, the DEA targeted two gardening-supply stores in Tempe. It demanded that the owners provide the names of customers who had purchased hydroponic equipment, grow lights, fans or copies of the book. Both refused. Al Reilly, the DEA agent who heads marijuana investigations in Arizona, ranted to the "Mesa Tribune": "The scumbags always hide behind the First Amendment. People are more concerned about civil rights than they are about some scumbag growing marijuana."*

PRANK GONE BAD

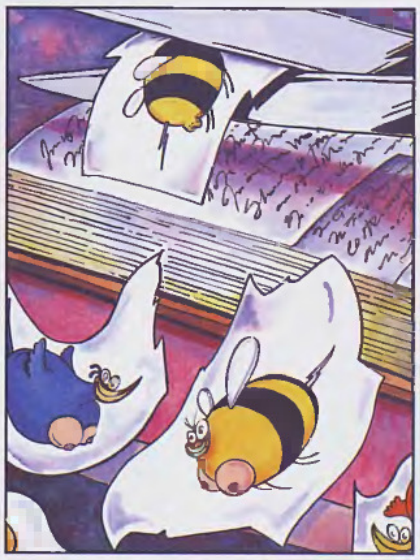
HOUSTON—*A medical supply company settled a lawsuit filed by a former employee who said three female co-workers had pulled his pants to his ankles. According to court documents, the man had told the women that he didn't always wear underwear. He said the women later tugged down his pants and dragged him across the floor. They then nicknamed him Pee Wee and Shorty. In his suit, the man charged that the firm did not provide adequate supervision and invaded his privacy by letting word of the incident leak out.*

QUICKIE CHARGES

NORTH SMITHFIELD, RHODE ISLAND—*The local police caused a stir after they charged two men with "abominable and detestable crimes against nature." The men had sex in the woods near a highway, but police heard about it only after one man reported that the other had stolen his wallet. Police arrested the thief for larceny, but charged both victim and thief with sodomy. After the ACLU and gay rights activists protested, the state attorney general dropped the sodomy charges.*

CUTTING EDGE IGNORANCE

BUNN, NORTH CAROLINA—*The Franklin County school board ordered that three chapters be removed from a high school textbook because they include information about sexually transmitted diseases, parenting and contraception. The board ruled*



that the chapters violate a new state law that forbids schools from teaching anything but abstinence unless the materials are approved by the community. A volunteer cut the chapters out before the books were distributed to students.

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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: KEVIN KLINE

a candid conversation with the amazingly versatile actor about his double life: film versus theater, comedy versus drama and, of course, kissing tom versus kissing sigourney

It may stand as the most famous kiss in American cinema. Last fall in the comedy "In and Out," Tom Selleck, playing a Geraldoesque reporter for a TV tabloid newsmagazine, locked lips with his co-star, Kevin Kline, who was playing a gay schoolteacher in deep denial. Well, he was in denial—until that smacker.

While the kissing scene (which lingered) made some laugh and others uncomfortable, it was merely another day at work for Kline. America's most chameleon-like actor simply brushed his teeth beforehand and shaved extra close. Kline is impossible to pigeonhole. He divides his career between Hollywood and Broadway, refuses to specialize in either comedy or drama and has won a Tony for Gilbert and Sullivan and an Oscar for playing a guy who gobbles live tropical fish. He won't even specialize when it comes to kissing: Right after smooching Selleck, Kline was kissing Sigourney Weaver (in the role of his neighbor's wife) in the riveting if desolate "The Ice Storm," and Hope Davis as Sasha, his mistress, in a critically praised stage production of "Ivanov," at New York's Lincoln Center.

Kline, 50, does much more than give a good theatrical kiss, of course. The "Los Angeles Times" noted, "A good number of serious moviegoers and theatergoers will argue that Kline is the best American actor of his generation at work right now." His versatility has made fans of those who work with him. "He's the only guy I know who can go from Jerry Lewis to Shakespeare," says "In and Out" director Frank Oz. Critics have compared him with Errol Flynn, and "The Christian Science Monitor" dubbed him "the American Olivier."

Like Olivier, Kline first acted in the theater, but most Americans know him for his movies, which include a number of hits. First came "Sophie's Choice" in 1982, in which he played an unforgettable schizophrenic opposite Meryl Streep's Sophie. The next year, he was a liberal activist turned running-shoe tycoon in "The Big Chill," a movie that defined the baby-boom generation.

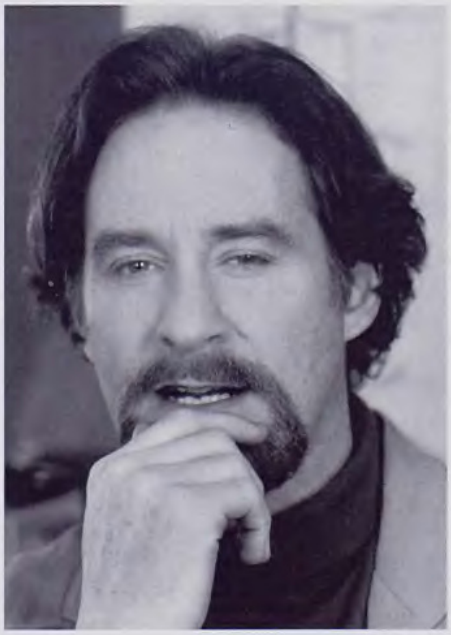
"The Big Chill" was Kline's first of five collaborations with screenwriter-director Lawrence Kasdan. Kline also played a gunslinger in the revisionist Western "Silverado," a hilariously conflicted Italian husband in "I Love You to Death," a Parisian hustler in "French Kiss" and then the regular Joe whose life is transformed when his car breaks down in the wrong part of town in "Grand Canyon."

Kasdan isn't the only filmmaker who has called Kline in for an encore. With John Cleese, Kline first played a half-witted, armpit-sniffing thug in "A Fish Called Wanda," a performance that won him an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor. Then he and Cleese, as well as others from "Wanda," teamed again for "Fierce Creatures." He was also twice directed by Sir Richard Attenborough, first in 1987 in the poignant apartheid-era "Cry Freedom," and again in 1992, when he played Douglas Fairbanks in the biopic "Chaplin."

Kline's stage credits are equally eclectic, including musical theater such as Harold Prince's "On the 20th Century" and Joseph Papp's "Pirates of Penzance," both of which earned him Tony awards. More often he has taken on dramatic roles in numerous productions of Shakespeare, ranging from a particularly cruel Richard III to dozens of riveting Hamlets, including one he directed in 1990 for PBS' "Great Performances" series. "New York Times" drama critic Frank Rich has called Kline "the pride of the American theater."

He received different kinds of notices as a child in St. Louis, where his father owned a toy-and-record store. Kevin attended St. Louis Priory, a boys' Catholic prep school run by Benedictine monks. There, if a

"John Cleese says I make Hamlet look decisive, but I'm not indecisive. I am reflective. I think before making decisions. But that isn't the same as indecision. I may brood a bit, but other times I'm a cheerful guy."



"I don't want to see gratuitous violence. At the same time, let's not forget that in 'Silverado' I kill a guy over my hat. I've contributed to the violent ethos in our collective unconscious. Yeah, I've done my share."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID ROSE

"Who knew 'A Fish Called Wanda' would be a hit? On the other hand, I thought 'Cry Freedom' was going to be hugely popular, because I stupidly thought Americans would be eager to know about apartheid."

student were caught smoking, he would be either expelled or whipped with a cane. Still, Kline smoked every day after lunch from his sophomore to his senior years. Though he was never caught, he was smacked on the hands with a plastic bat for being something of a smartass.

He acted in his first play in high school, but he planned on a career in music, not drama. When he arrived at Indiana University, however, he auditioned for a production of "Macbeth" and inadvertently landed a role. Soon he switched his major to speech and theater. Not long after that, he co-founded an off-campus theater company.

After graduating, he headed to Juilliard in New York to enroll in the newly established drama division, founded by John Houseman. Then came minor roles with the New York Shakespeare Festival.

Kline met the actor Phoebe Cates during casting for "The Big Chill," but they didn't date until a decade later, when Kline hired Cates' former personal assistant. One of the assistant's first assignments was to arrange a date with her former employer. Kline and Cates were married within a year and now have two children, Owen, 6, and Greta, 4. A dedicated family man, Kline has been known to reschedule meetings in order to attend parent-teacher conferences.

PLAYBOY *tapped Contributing Editor* **David Sheff** *to catch up with one of America's busiest actors. Sheff reports: "I learned how many women of a certain generation adore Kline when my friends heard that I was off to interview him. I had more offers of free assistance—to hold the tape recorder, if nothing else—than when I set out to see Nicolas Cage, Sting or Bruce Willis. Perhaps I shouldn't have been surprised. Back in 1983, 'Rolling Stone' reported on a phenomenon the editors dubbed the 'Kevin Kline crush,' suffered for years by almost every woman in New York.*

"We met in that city while he was in previews of 'Ivanov.' The play was to open in a couple of weeks, and Kline was immersed in what he described as a mood of Chekhovian solemnity. In fact, he often apologized for being so grim, though I found him cheery for someone who takes his own life every night and twice on Sundays.

"The first interview session was to be held at his Upper East Side office, near his home. But his secretary called to say that the office was a disaster, under construction, and wondered if we could meet elsewhere. He came to my hotel room. It was a nonsmoking room, but the chain-smoking Kline couldn't refrain. Later in the day, a maid apparently squealed and I got a call from a disturbed hotel manager. Obviously a theater devotee, the manager sighed when he heard that it was Kline who had ignored the signs posted around the room. 'Aaah,' he said. 'What would you expect from a guy who spends all his time skulking around as Hamlet and Richard III?'"

PLAYBOY: Does Hollywood get it when movie actors do plays, or is it viewed as strange or quaint?

KLINE: Many people in Hollywood love theater, but some don't get it at all. I was going off to do Shakespeare in New York after my first movies and a reporter for the *Los Angeles Times* was horrified. He said, "Your career was going so well. Why are you going back to the stage?" I said, "What do you mean? I'm doing Hamlet in New York. It's the pinnacle. It doesn't get better than this!" So sure, there must be some producers and studio people out there who are scratching their heads in puzzlement.

PLAYBOY: On the other hand, are your friends in the theater contemptuous of Hollywood?

KLINE: Not really. It's difficult to make a good living in the theater. It's a sad, lamentable state of affairs that this country does not support the arts. The depressing fact is that actors are subsidizing the theater almost as much as anyone else. We're not onstage for the money. Unless you're starring in a hit Broadway show, it's hard to make ends meet. I'm relatively rare and fortunate, able to indulge both passions, because I do love making movies as much as I love the theater.

I hate to give away the craft, but I parked those little rubber fish in the corner of my mouth.

PLAYBOY: Is acting acting, whether it's in movies or onstage?

KLINE: When I started doing movies, I was struck by how different it was. But I've come to realize that acting is acting. It's the same process—both media require similar inner workings—though the forms are very different. Film acting is about nuance. The camera is so close that you can do things you can't do onstage. The things you do for the camera are infinitesimal and wouldn't be perceived in a theater. Theater is much larger, exaggerated.

PLAYBOY: You once said, "I come back to the theater for the words."

KLINE: That's right, whereas movies are about the visual. You can obviously have great dialogue in movies, but ultimately the story is told through visual means. Most theater, certainly Shakespeare, is about language.

PLAYBOY: You have commented on how rude people can be in audiences. Is it getting better or worse?

KLINE: Worse. It must be the influence of television.

PLAYBOY: How does television affect theater audiences?

KLINE: They don't understand there's a difference. They're used to saying, "Honey, will you get me another beer?" while the show is on. I was doing a scene with Glenne Headly in *Arms and the Man* at Circle in the Square, and two women in front started talking: "She looks like Maggie Smith, doesn't she?" "Oh, do you think?" We heard every word. Glenne and I were looking at each other. What are these people thinking? They don't think about the fact that everyone in the audience can hear them, or that the actors can too—we're only three feet away. They're oblivious. It must be TV. What else? Another time I was onstage and heard someone taking out what had to be a pack of Tic Tacs. He was shaking it. You could look at it, if you were so disposed, as the ultimate tribute—they are so involved in the performance they have no idea they're shaking out their candies. Unfortunately I have to think there's a level of crassness, stupidity and bad breeding.

PLAYBOY: They're almost as bad as people who talk during movies, but at least there the actors can't hear it.

KLINE: I used to turn around to look at them and shush them. But now, especially in New York City, they probably have guns. They could be having a bad day and just blow you away. So I don't go to certain movie theaters and I tend not to shush.

PLAYBOY: Why did you decide on *Ivanov* for your latest onstage role?

KLINE: It has a rawness that still has the trappings of melodrama. Each act ends with what Chekhov called a punch in the stomach. Only Chekhov can put together melodrama, tragedy, farce and humor and have it be a good piece. Only he can capture the humor in torment. It's very funny and very sad.

PLAYBOY: One of your two movies last year, *The Ice Storm*, was also sad. In fact it was downright bleak.

KLINE: You think so? Oh, good.

PLAYBOY: So you enjoy making people depressed?

KLINE: That movie is a lament and an indictment. But I hope it's more than that. It makes you want to do better. The movie gracefully invites you to identify with the saddest part of the human condition, the inability to make contact. The people in the film, every one of them, desperately need to make contact and have no idea how to do it.

PLAYBOY: Was it a challenge to make your character—a philanderer who barely has time for his children—sympathetic?

KLINE: Yeah, and the way we tried to do it was to have people understand him and, in understanding him, forgive him a little. Chekhov said, "I've always tried to avoid heroes and villains, but I haven't always successfully avoided fools." My character is a fool who lives in the gray area where most of us live our lives, not

as heroes nor villains.

PLAYBOY: The movie painted a dismal picture of the Seventies.

KLINE: It was the time when all our values were thrown out the window, after the Sixties. But it's too easy to blame that condition on the Seventies. We're still in the Seventies, the worst of it.

PLAYBOY: What aspect of the Seventies lives on?

KLINE: Thank God the clothes don't! Good God! The most hideous conglomeration of clashing, horrific patterns and fabrics. If you wanted to punish someone, you couldn't devise anything more uncomfortable. Thankfully, the clothes are gone, but the insidious legacy of the Seventies is the obsession with hipness. It was important to be hip then. It was hip to be hip, and then you became tragically hip, and then hipper than thou.

PLAYBOY: What were the Seventies like for you?

KLINE: Not like in the movie, because the rich, suburban world was not my milieu. I was an aspiring actor in acting school, studying the classics. I partook of the sexual revolution in college, as did we all. But the movie shows that suburban anomaly and a group of privileged people who on the surface have everything. It's the milieu Updike and Cheever wrote about.

PLAYBOY: So you never went to a key party like the one in the movie, at which the husbands toss their car keys into a bowl and the wives go home with the owner of whichever set of keys they choose?

KLINE: No. In fact, I'd never heard of such parties. But I've met people who, after seeing the movie, have said, "Yeah, there were key parties. I went."

PLAYBOY: There's been talk about an Academy Award nomination for your performance. What do you think?

KLINE: Nothing. I've heard that before. The one time I won an Oscar was the time I never suspected it for a moment. *A Fish Called Wanda* wasn't generally considered Oscar-caliber material. You don't get Oscars for playing a character who says, "Don't touch his dick" five times and then, "Touch his dick and he's dead." You don't get Oscars playing a guy who smells his armpits.

PLAYBOY: Maybe it was for eating the fish.

KLINE: Maybe it was.

PLAYBOY: We're dying to know: Did you eat a real fish?

KLINE: I hate to give away the craft of acting, but the truth is that I parked these little rubber, acrylic-painted fish in the corner of my mouth the way I used to park brussels sprouts. Then, after the take, I spit them out. They were so disgusting that by the end of the day I was asking for real fish.

PLAYBOY: Nicolas Cage told us he ate a cockroach when he made *Vampire's Kiss*.

KLINE: Well, he's a real actor, isn't he? Me, I will suffer only so much for my art.

PLAYBOY: No cockroach eating?

KLINE: No, and I would want to ask how many he ate. Did they shoot it in one take? What happens when you do seven takes? I had to eat quite a few fish. Had they been real, I would have done some damage to the tropical fish population, which is in peril. Saving tropical fish is one of my causes.

PLAYBOY: So you won an Oscar for eating plastic fish.

KLINE: Yes. I got a call one morning, very early, and was told the Oscar nominations had come out and that I was nominated. I asked, "For what?" This is not to say I wasn't touched. I know it's a cliché, but the nomination really is everything, because actors nominate actors. It means a lot that your peers think you did exceptional work. And I had not been in a movie in which I was dying of some infirmity, which generally helps. Agents actually tell you: "You know, this is Oscar material," usually because the role has you severely crippled and then you get to die.

PLAYBOY: We've read that you keep your Oscar in a bag.

KLINE: I don't like displaying it, that's all. I think that would be in poor taste. So it's concealed.

PLAYBOY: Did your wife really dress it up in a tutu, as we've also read?

KLINE: When we moved he came out of

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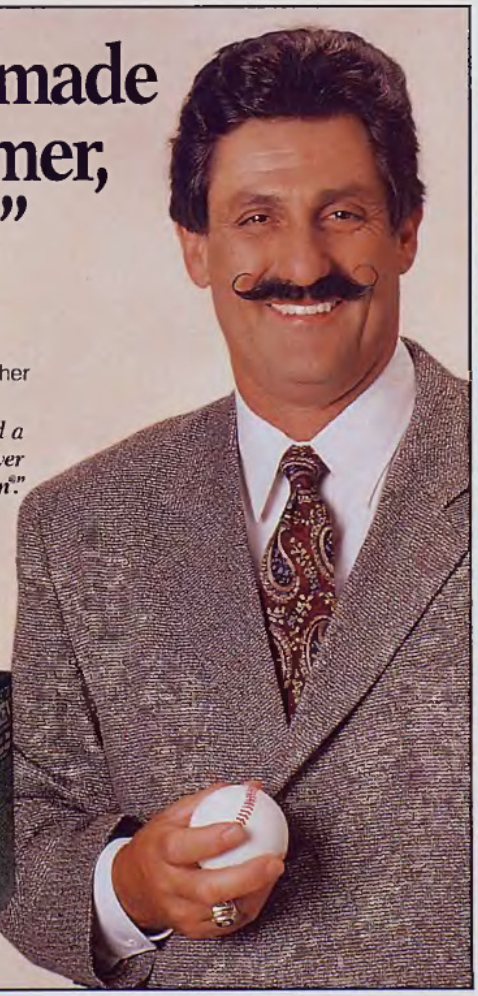

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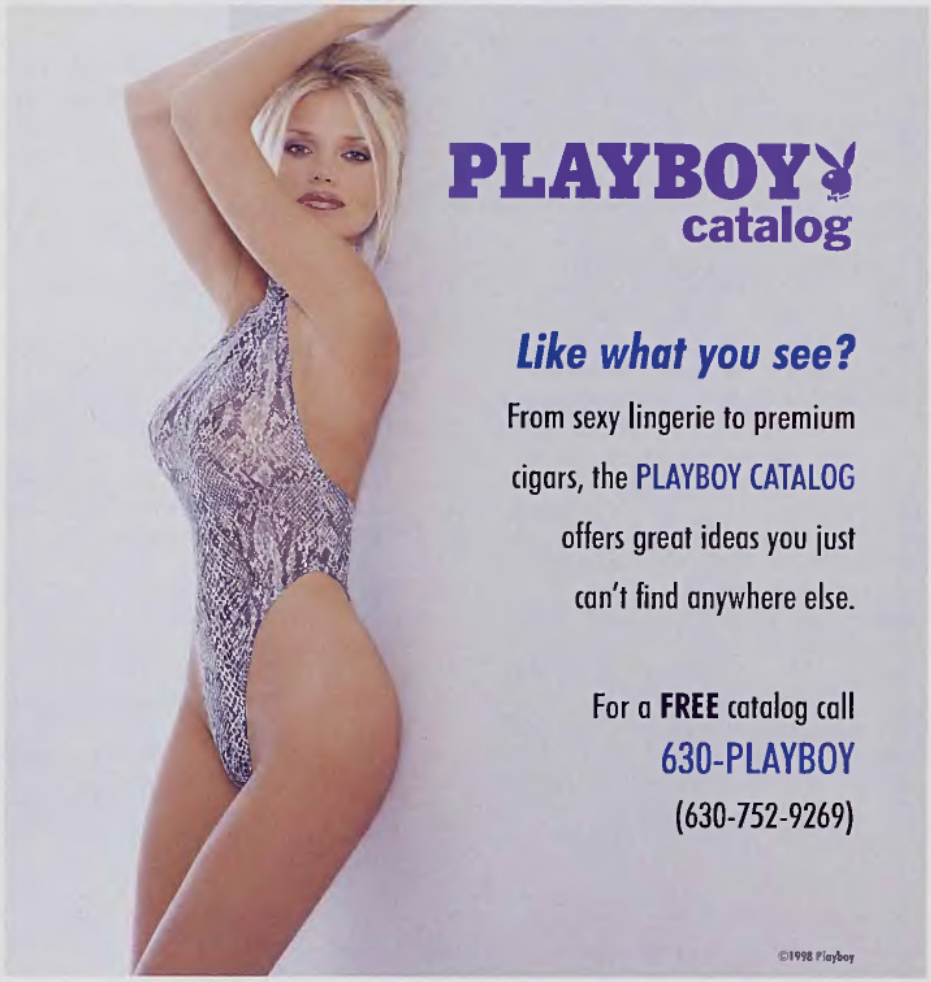
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his clandestine spot. My wife and her friend were unpacking, and my daughter had just gotten all this Barbie stuff, so, yes, I came home and there was Oscar in a tutu. And some other paraphernalia. It happened that the Barbie things fit perfectly. It's not that I'm not proud of the award. It's that I don't like advertising it. [*Laughs*] Actually, I keep it hidden because I don't like people touching it, getting their fingerprints on it.

PLAYBOY: Before *The Ice Storm* you did the comedy *In and Out*. Do you intentionally do successive movies that are that different in tone?

KLINE: Many times I do. I look for a movie that is an antidote to what I've just completed. I did *Fierce Creatures* and signed on to do *In and Out*. Before that was *French Kiss*. So after that light stuff, when my agent called and said, "I've just read the bleakest, most depressing movie," I said, "Hurrah! Send it!" I come from repertory, in which you alternate five or more plays. *Three Sisters* one night, *The Way of the World* the next, then *Richard III*. It's about variety, which keeps you constantly stimulated.

PLAYBOY: In *In and Out*, you play a gay teacher who is so closeted that he almost gets married. How did you decide which gay stereotypes to use and which to avoid?

KLINE: I tend to be flamboyant at times anyway. I use my hands, and my posture is very erect. I thought I would have to butch up to play the part. Needless to say, that's another stereotype; you and I both know gay men who are much more butch and much less butch. It's not that the character is gay and therefore prissy. His prissiness comes from the fact that he's in such denial about who he is. He keeps those bow ties tied so tightly because he is cutting off everything from his neck down. He doesn't want to deal with what's down there, because he's terrified that his family and the townspeople he loves will ostracize him.

PLAYBOY: As far as you're concerned, did he always know he was gay, or was he awakened to his sexuality when he was kissed by Tom Selleck's character?

KLINE: I don't think it works that way. I think people know, though they may push it away, deny it. The kiss is fabulous, I think, because it is part of the movie tradition in which we see a couple fighting and then the guy grabs the woman and kisses her and she's, "My God! I've never felt that before. Maybe this is the man of my dreams." It's in the great tradition of screwball comedy kisses—the guy grabs the woman and plants one on her and she's forever changed. In this case, the guy grabs a guy. That's the twist.

PLAYBOY: Was this your first theatrical kiss with a man?

KLINE: Years before I did one onstage in *Edward II*.

PLAYBOY: Was it just another movie kiss,

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or did you think about it differently before shooting the scene?

KLINE: In a way it was normal, in that you brushed your teeth before shooting it. You didn't eat garlic beforehand. And you shaved close. One difference is that this time you hoped he shaved close too, so you wouldn't get too much beard burn after shooting the scene many times. You normally don't have to worry about the other person shaving.

PLAYBOY: After you kissed Tom Selleck in *In and Out*, you kissed Sigourney Weaver in *The Ice Storm*. Who's better?

KLINE: I can tell you which I preferred, but that has to do with preference, not ability. I'm sure Tom is a great kisser, too.

PLAYBOY: Is it particularly risky to play a gay character these days, when the gay community may take issue with any perceived slight?

KLINE: It occurred to me, but I didn't dwell on it. Political correctness has no place in the arts. Anyone, gay activist or not, who sees *In and Out* without a sense of humor won't get it. This movie presents a lighthearted, comedic view of these issues. You can't bring too much of a political agenda to it. Still, I was heartened to see that the gay press embraced the movie. A good friend of mine pointed out the alarming percentage of gay adolescents who kill themselves and said that movies like this can help turn that around. Wouldn't that be nice? The movie ultimately says, "What's the big deal?" Your sexuality is your sexuality, and it has nothing to do with your character. Further, it's not ultimately a movie about gayness. It's about self-acceptance. It's about being who you really are—life's so much easier that way.

PLAYBOY Was there any reaction from members of the Christian right, who regularly campaign against *Ellen* and other shows that portray homosexuality positively?

KLINE: If so, I haven't heard about it. At one early screening, I heard that a large, macho man stood up during the kiss, which goes on for a while, and yelled, "Stop the madness!" I'm sure it didn't go down well with everyone.

PLAYBOY: If there's a shocked reaction, it must partly be due to the fact that gay sex is rarely shown in movies or on television.

KLINE: And let's not forget the puritanical streak that runs deep and wide through our country. Europeans—many, not all—couldn't be more blasé about it. [*With a French accent*] "What is the big deal about two men kissing? What is your problem?" But cinematic sex of whatever kind is a big part of movies. My best memories of movies are associated with sex. I remember seeing *Dr. Strangelove* the first time.

PLAYBOY: You may be the only person who found *Dr. Strangelove* sexy.

KLINE: It was the first time I held hands with my then-girlfriend. It was wild and erotic at the time. Earlier, in another movie, I saw a naked woman for the first time. It was in *The Horse's Mouth*, with Alec Guinness. An artist was working on a nude sculpture and there was a naked model. An assistant was feeding her chili. I remember thinking, Wow—a naked lady. I wondered if my parents, who took me to the movie, had any idea there would be a naked lady for me to look at.

PLAYBOY: Was that your motivation to go into the movie business?

KLINE: The truth is that I never thought about going into the movie business. I originally thought I might compose and perform music.

PLAYBOY: Were your parents musicians?

KLINE: My father was an opera lover and wanted to be an opera singer in his youth. But his family kind of steered him into the family business.

PLAYBOY: A toy store.

KLINE: It started as a record store and became a toy-and-record store and ended up a toy store. We had nice Christmases.

PLAYBOY: You went to a boys' Catholic school that was run by Benedictine monks. Was it a typical Catholic school as far as discipline was concerned—rulers on knuckles?

KLINE: You would get a book upside your head if you were really bad. They still had corporeal punishment—for cheating, smoking. The headmaster had a bamboo cane with a metal tip. I never felt it but I did hear the bump, bump, whack! It made our blood run cold. If you were a smart-ass, you were sent to Father Leonard, who would give it to you on your hands with this nasty little plastic thing shaped like the sole of a shoe. That, I got. I remember the ringing in my ears, which was as painful as the sting.

PLAYBOY: You have said that the boys at your school had a terrible reputation with the nearby Sacred Heart girls. Was it deserved?

KLINE: Absolutely. We were incorrigible. Well, the truth is that our worst sin was nothing much more exciting than smoking.

PLAYBOY: Did you act in high school?

KLINE: My high school had what was called the senior play. I found myself very calm onstage while my friends were basically vomiting in the wings. I thought, Gee, I don't feel like vomiting. I'm rather enjoying this. Still, I planned on studying music and went to Indiana for that. I took one acting class, though. The teacher wanted us to see what auditions were like, so we went to auditions for *Macbeth*. We watched all these students read, and then the director turned to me. "You haven't read," he said. I explained, "No, no, we're just here observing." He asked for my name and then announced, "And now, ladies and gentlemen, Kevin Kline is going to read Duncan, the king." I had watched other people and thought, Well, use your low-

est, phoniest voice. I hadn't a clue what I was saying. I didn't understand a word of Shakespeare. Until then, the only time I had seen Shakespeare was on a date, a college production of *King Lear*. But we were necking through the first act and left at intermission. I did Duncan, the king, and was cast as the bleeding captain who comes on at the beginning of the play and has about 20 lines and then collapses in a faint. That was the extent of it. But it's how I got into the theater. Only then, hearing the play night after night, did I begin to fall in love with Shakespeare and with acting.

I ended up switching my major. I was dating a girl who was in a small group doing a kind of political, satirical revue, and I was asked to play the piano. I started getting little roles and became a full-fledged member, doing plays at the university theater and in a local coffeehouse. Then we started doing improvisational theater and finally took over the coffeehouse and made it into our own coffeehouse theater. That's where I really got hooked. I went from there to Juilliard. There I worked with John Houseman and went on to work with him for an acting company. We got on a bus and got off four years later, having toured the country, in every shape and size of theater, doing modern and Shakespeare and everything else.

PLAYBOY: So do you think it was inevitable that you gravitated toward Shakespeare and have done more Shakespeare than anything else?

KLINE: I suppose it was, though it was a roundabout route. I loved Shakespeare. The irony, of course, is that after four years in the company, I had never played a major Shakespearean role. It wasn't until later, after I was in *Pirates of Penzance*, working for Joe Papp, that I had a major role in a Shakespeare play. Papp asked if I had ever thought about Shakespeare. "Thought about it? That's what I want to do." *Pirates* was supposed to have been a four-week romp in the park, but it had turned into a Broadway show and a movie. So it began. We first did *Richard III*. Later, Papp asked what I wanted to do next. I said, "I want to do *the guy*." That's how David Mamet always referred to Hamlet. But Papp said he didn't want to direct *Hamlet* then. I finally did the guy a couple of years later.

PLAYBOY: What is it about Hamlet that drew you to him?

KLINE: What is it about the guy that draws every actor who aspires to do the best there is in theater? I remember talking about it to Donald Madden, who had played *Richard III* in Central Park, a production in which I did nothing but carry a spear. He had done the longest-running *Hamlet* on Broadway. He told me how he'd prepared for 15 years for the role. He said, "If you want to play Hamlet, start now. Get a pocket-size edition of the play. Carry it with you everywhere." That's more or less what I did. When the opportunity came 15 years later, I was ready. The character fascinated me, and I wanted to say those words. I wanted to understand them in the deepest way possible by getting inside them, by being him.

PLAYBOY: Do you relate to Hamlet? It has been said that you're Hamlet-like in your indecision.

KLINE: John Cleese says I make Hamlet look decisive, but I'm not indecisive. Like Hamlet, I am reflective. I think before making decisions. But that isn't the same as indecision.

PLAYBOY: Which is not to say you brood.

KLINE: Sometimes I agonize over certain things. But other times, no. I may brood a bit now, but that's because I'm immersed in Chekhov. Other times I'm a cheerful guy.

PLAYBOY: Recently a number of Shakespeare's plays have been made into movies. Do you have any favorites?

KLINE: I haven't seen all of them, but Kenneth Branagh's *Much Ado About Nothing* was fantastic. Branagh asked my wife to play Hero. When she was off to meet him, I said, "Ask him why I'm not playing fucking Benedick." I had never met him or anything, but the most fun I've ever had onstage was playing Benedick. I love that character. So Phoebe gave him the message and returned with his message to me: "Because *I'm* playing fucking Benedick." He captured the comedy and the darkness. I was terribly moved and laughed uproariously. I am thrilled it reached as wide an audience as it did.

PLAYBOY: Even while you acted in Shakespeare and other plays, you were in a soap opera. Did you fear you might get trapped there?

KLINE: Not until later. When the soap opera was offered to me, I had been out of the acting company for about a year. I vowed never to do a commercial or a soap opera. But one of an artist's duties is to feed himself. It's hard to be creative on an empty stomach. So I rationalized it. I did a commercial or two and a soap opera.

PLAYBOY: Commercials for what?

KLINE: [*Groans*] For Thom McAn shoes. And one of those horrific Folgers coffee ads: the husband who can't bear his wife's coffee. He's just about to collapse until Mrs. Olsen shows up in their kitchen to tell them about mountain-grown coffee. But the commercials and soap opera were great gigs, because I was able to work in the theater at night. That's how I supported myself until *On the Twentieth Century* came along.

PLAYBOY: Which brought your first Tony and also led to *Pirates of Penzance*, which apparently led to *Sophie's Choice*. How?

KLINE: Alan Pakula had seen me in a play called *Loose Ends* the year before, but according to him, *Pirates of Penzance* is what made him ask me to be in *Sophie's Choice*. I asked him why, since the musical and movie seem to have nothing in common. He explained that the key to Nathan in

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Like all medicines, ZYBAN may cause side effects.

- The most common side effects include dry mouth and difficulty sleeping. These side effects are generally mild and often disappear after a few weeks. If you have difficulty sleeping, avoid taking your medicine too close to bedtime.
- The most common side effects that caused people to stop taking ZYBAN during clinical studies were shakiness and skin rash.
- Contact your doctor or health care professional if you have a rash or other troublesome side effects.
- Use caution before driving a car or operating complex, hazardous machinery until you know if ZYBAN affects your ability to perform these tasks.

10. Can I drink alcohol while I am taking ZYBAN?

It is best to not drink alcohol at all or to drink very little while taking ZYBAN. If you drink a lot of alcohol and suddenly stop, you may increase your chance of having a seizure. Therefore, it is important to discuss your use of alcohol with your doctor before you begin taking ZYBAN.

11. Will ZYBAN affect other medicines I am taking?

ZYBAN may affect other medicines you're taking. It is important not to take medicines that may increase the chance for you to have a seizure. Therefore, you should make sure that your doctor knows about all medicines—prescription or over-the-counter—you are taking or plan to take.

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13. How should I store ZYBAN?

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This summary provides important information about ZYBAN. This summary cannot replace the more detailed information that you need from your doctor. If you have any questions or concerns about either ZYBAN or smoking cessation, talk to your doctor or other health care professional.

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Sophie's Choice is not that he was enigmatic and morose; it's his capacity for joy. He saw some sense of that joy in *Pirates*. I said, "OK. I'm not going to talk you out of it."

PLAYBOY: Was it intimidating to have your first movie experience working with Meryl Streep in such a heavy drama?

KLINE: Terrifying. I was told by friends in the theater, "What you do onstage is not going to work in the movies." They didn't know that, because they'd never done a film, but they said it, and I thought, Wait a minute! All the experience I've accrued over the years is meaningless? What am I going to do? Pakula said, "I'm your net. I'm going to catch you if you fall." At first, working with Meryl—who had already made *French Lieutenant's Woman* and won an Oscar for *Kramer vs. Kramer*—terrified me, too, but then I thought, How exciting. So it was terrifying and exciting, and I couldn't have wished for better people to hold my hand than Meryl Streep and Alan Pakula. And it led to *The Big Chill*.

PLAYBOY: You've made five movies with director Lawrence Kasdan. Why has the collaboration been so successful?

KLINE: We think we push each other to be creative in interesting ways. We know each other very well. He's a remarkable writer who cares enormously about what he does.

PLAYBOY: In *French Kiss* and *I Love You to Death* he had you doing accents. Recently Brad Pitt was given a rough time by critics for his erratic accent.

KLINE: Yeah. Larry persuaded me to play an Italian in *I Love You to Death*, which turned out to be the most fun ever. I loved being that guy. When he next said a Frenchman, I just laughed. French was my best subject in high school, but I couldn't speak it at all. The traps are immense. The tendency is to do Inspector Clouseau, which is one of my favorite characters Peter Sellers ever created. But I thought it was a splendid opportunity to learn to speak French. The idea of doing several scenes in French with French actors whom I admired tremendously was also exciting.

PLAYBOY: You taught your co-star, Meg Ryan, some French.

KLINE: I told her how to thank the French-speaking crew. She thought she was saying, "Thank you very much"—"*Merci beaucoup*." But she was actually saying, "*Merci, beau cul*"—"Thank you, nice ass"! Pronunciation is everything.

PLAYBOY: Of the movies you made with Kasdan, the first, *The Big Chill*, is the best known. That movie has come to represent the best and worst of an entire generation. Was there a sense that you were making a movie that would get such attention?

KLINE: There was something that resonated and drew us all to the project. But I assumed that the movie was too thoughtful, too talky, to ever find an audience.

PLAYBOY: Did you relate to your character, the former radical who had sold out and become a suburban husband and father and successful businessman?

KLINE: I related more to the characters played by Jeff Goldblum [the gossip magazine reporter] and Tom Berenger [the Magnum-like action-TV star]. They were both very funny and touched something in me. Larry, though, saw something in me and said I would be more challenged playing this straight, mainstream guy, especially after playing Nathan in *Sophie's Choice*, a character who is way out there. But Glenn Close, who played my wife in *The Big Chill*, and I complained that we were the happy, well-adjusted, complacent couple surrounded by these wonderful, neurotic, funny nutcases. We felt we were boring and kept asking Larry, "Can't you make us a little neurotic, too?"

PLAYBOY: The couple was so solid that she was willing to let her husband have sex with her good friend, who wanted to get pregnant.

KLINE: I remember Glenn and I asking Larry if he thought we could pull that off. I mean, how many wives are really going to tell their husbands to do them a favor by sleeping with another woman? But apparently some women do. I subsequently met a number of people who told me that it happened in their marriage just like it did in the movie. Kasdan is always prophetic. When *Grand Canyon* came out critics said, "What a bleak and overstated view of the problems between the races in Los Angeles. There's no such division." And then the riots happened, and they were all banging on Larry's door, saying, "Your movie was prophetic. Would you comment?" As it turned out, it wasn't an overstatement at all.

PLAYBOY: Did it surprise you that baby boomers became known as the *Big Chill* generation?

KLINE: I just think Larry and Barbara Benedek, who wrote it with him, tapped into something essential and timely and captured the imagination of that particular generation.

PLAYBOY: Have many of your movies surprised you—art films that became hits, or movies that you thought would be huge but fizzled?

KLINE: I loved the idea of doing *A Fish Called Wanda*, because it would be fun and because it was Monty Python, my idol. But who knew it would be a hit? It shocked us all when it became so popular. On the other hand, I thought *Cry Freedom* was going to be hugely popular, because I stupidly thought Americans would be eager to know about apartheid. For that one, gratification came years later when I heard from the journalist I played, Donald Woods, that Nelson Mandela loved the movie and said it was very important in spreading the word about apartheid. I think it helped people understand the conditions in South Africa. But it was never the hit I imagined.

PLAYBOY: Can movies such as *Cry Freedom* help with social and political problems?

KLINE: Absolutely. Especially for the adolescent forging an identity for himself, movies can have an enormous influence. I remember latching on to things in movies and deciding either, "That's what I don't want to be" or "That's what I want to be." They changed me. They affect the collective unconscious. At the end of *Marat/Sade*, the Marquis de Sade says something like, "Our little story has planted seeds in your mind." I don't think we always know which seeds we plant, but movies and plays do plant seeds. Something takes root in our confused, bewildered, unconscious selves that may make us better people.

PLAYBOY: Does that inform the choices you make about which movies and plays you'll do?

KLINE: Absolutely. I read a script and can tell by page five if it's a story not worth telling, if it's life negating or spiritually bereft. Or something more.

PLAYBOY: So we won't be seeing you in a slasher movie anytime soon.

KLINE: I don't want every movie I make or play I do to be uplifting, necessarily. But I do want to keep my standards as high as I possibly can and still make a decent living.

PLAYBOY: So movies for you aren't just movies.

KLINE: Some movies are just movies. But I think music or films or any art that merely celebrates the violent, destructive side of human nature is generally worthless. Why celebrate it?

PLAYBOY: Would you go so far as to censor violent art?

KLINE: Censor art? I wish we could censor ourselves! Businessmen making business decisions don't censor themselves. But we're teaching kids to deal with problems in the most base way: "Hey, that's my toy!" You smack 'em. It's much harder to develop a sense of mercy or tolerance or love, joy or beauty. And it's not that I'm against violence per se. *Dr. Strangelove* is maybe my all-time favorite movie and it ends with Armageddon. You can't get more violent than that. But it leaves a mark. While they're singing that ending song—[*Singing*] "We'll meet again. Don't know where; don't know when"—there is mushroom cloud after mushroom cloud and a vision is planted: It's so terrifying that the audience will hopefully never again give themselves over to the idea of that violence. It will help ingrain an abhorrence of war and violence. So there is certainly a place for violence and ugliness in all kinds of art. But a steady diet can be bad for us. And here I am sounding priggish and conservative, or maybe

I'm too sensitive. One thing I know is that I don't want to see gratuitous violence. At the same time, as I rail against violence in movies, let's not forget that in *Silverado* I kill a guy over my hat. I'm not Joe Pristine. I've contributed to the violent ethos in our collective unconscious. Yeah, I've done my share.

PLAYBOY: And, as we've discussed, you've eaten a fish.

KLINE: That's right! I tortured this poor fellow and ate his fish. I've done my share of disreputable and reprehensible acts.

PLAYBOY: Including portraying a politician in *Dave*. Playing the president, did you come to feel presidential?

KLINE: I started to appreciate what a bad job it is. "Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown." It was one of those, but it goes so much deeper than that.

PLAYBOY: Bush was in office when you made the film. Was your dour, mean-spirited president a takeoff on him?

KLINE: No. We tried to make my character very different. We wanted him to be sort of an amalgam. He was a miserable guy, sort of dead inside.

PLAYBOY: But comparisons to George Bush were made, and your youthful, idealistic Dave was also compared to Bill Clinton, who was in office when the movie came out.

KLINE: That was all pure projection by the audience. But people liked Dave's humanity, and I think they liked Bill Clinton's, too.

PLAYBOY: Has Clinton retained that?

KLINE: I think his humanity has prevailed in many ways.

PLAYBOY: Is it true that Warner Bros., the studio behind the movie, wouldn't approve you and wanted director Ivan Reitman to get Kevin Costner, Michael Douglas or Arnold Schwarzenegger to play Dave?

KLINE: That sounds true, yeah. Warren Beatty was in there too at one time. Anyone but me, for God's sake. I remember Ivan telling me that he had to explain, respectfully, that Arnold couldn't be president. You have to be a native-born American citizen to be president of the United States. I don't blame them for wanting him, though. They wanted people to come to the movie. And those actors could have been wonderful, though we've all seen what can happen when people are cast because of their star power or box office drawing power and aren't exactly right for the part.

PLAYBOY: After the movie came out, how did you feel when you were asked so much about your politics?

KLINE: I didn't like it. I think it's implicit where my sentiments lie. I prefer to leave it at that. It makes me uncomfortable when actors spout politics. I want to listen to experts. I would feel uncomfortable being a spokesperson or poster boy. I want to act. The more one steps out—even gives interviews—the more difficult it is to be seen as the character in the movie or play. I've read reviews in which the writer says, "And then Kevin Kline kisses Tom Selleck." But no, it's not me, it's the character. The public does this, too. "I loved it that Tom Hanks was always talking about chocolates." It's this weird thing we have about movie stars. We see their movies, read about them, see them on talk shows, see the paparazzi shots of them going to the bathroom on a tree in Central Park. At what point do we no longer see Arnold Schwarzenegger as the character he is playing, but as Arnold Schwarzenegger?

PLAYBOY: Do you understand the obsession with celebrities?

KLINE: I think it's that everyone feels more and more anonymous. People seem to need to see celebrities become real: "Oh, look, they're alcoholics," or "They're in drug rehab." Or "Oh, look, they're unfaithful to their wives; they're like me." There seems to be a need to feel heroic and grandiose and also to get in touch with our anonymous commonness. Am I right? I don't know. I'm making this up as I go along.

PLAYBOY: One recent survey revealed that people want fame more than anything else.

KLINE: And what is fame? Feeling special. Feeling that you, in some way, have done something that has made people notice you. Maybe people aren't feeling noticed enough.

PLAYBOY: Do fans frequently bother you?

KLINE: The fact is, I've never had the type of attention that's a problem, not like Sylvester Stallone has, or John Travolta or any of those guys. Where I live in New York City, you're always on the streets: You walk everywhere and encounter people all the time. New York City is anonymous. People just go about their business. God forbid you lock eyes with someone who turns out to have a gun and will shoot you because you looked at him funny. That happened the other day: Some kid shot another kid in school because he looked at him. It's like being in prison. But I'm generally not hassled. Occasionally people come up to me. I was walking through the park and some guy rode by on his bike and yelled, "Hey, Kev!"—very familiar, very American. That's not a bad thing. You feel a little self-conscious, but that familiarity among Americans, which so puts off Europeans, is sweet. Still, I would always want to protect my family from it.

PLAYBOY: You have two young children. Do they understand what you do for a living?

KLINE: In a way, though they don't understand certain aspects of it. My son was at camp, where they showed a movie. He came home and told us about it and said it was about Steve in the Army. It was *Sgt. Bilko*. Steve is Steve Martin, a family friend. He said it sweetly and innocently. I thought, Oh God, when is he going to realize that his fellow campers don't know Steve in quite the same way that he does? God forbid he should think it makes him special in some way. That's the part I worry about.

PLAYBOY: Is it tough to protect the kids when both parents are actors?

KLINE: Not the way we live. We have a normal life, if you can call life in New York normal.

PLAYBOY: You worked with your wife in *Princess Caraboo*. Do you enjoy working together?

KLINE: It was wonderful. We also did *Much Ado About Nothing* onstage, as well as a thing on *Sesame Street*.

PLAYBOY: How did you meet?

KLINE: The first time was reading *The Big Chill*. Larry got a bunch of New York actors together to read through the script. Phoebe read the part Meg Tilly ended up playing.

PLAYBOY: Did you ask her out?

KLINE: Not until years later. Phoebe was rehearsing a Russian play, *Nest of the Woodground*, that Joe Papp was directing at the Public Theater. I was rehearsing *Henry V* upstairs. Our paths crossed several times. I finally asked her out.

PLAYBOY: Relationships in your business are notoriously tough. Is it easier because you aren't in Hollywood?

KLINE: I don't think it's geographic. I think we're both sensible and we don't separate for long periods of time. We take care of the marriage. I guess it's a sense of prioritizing. The family is not secondary. Career decisions are made with the family's best interest in mind. The last two movies I made were shot around the city. I came home every night.

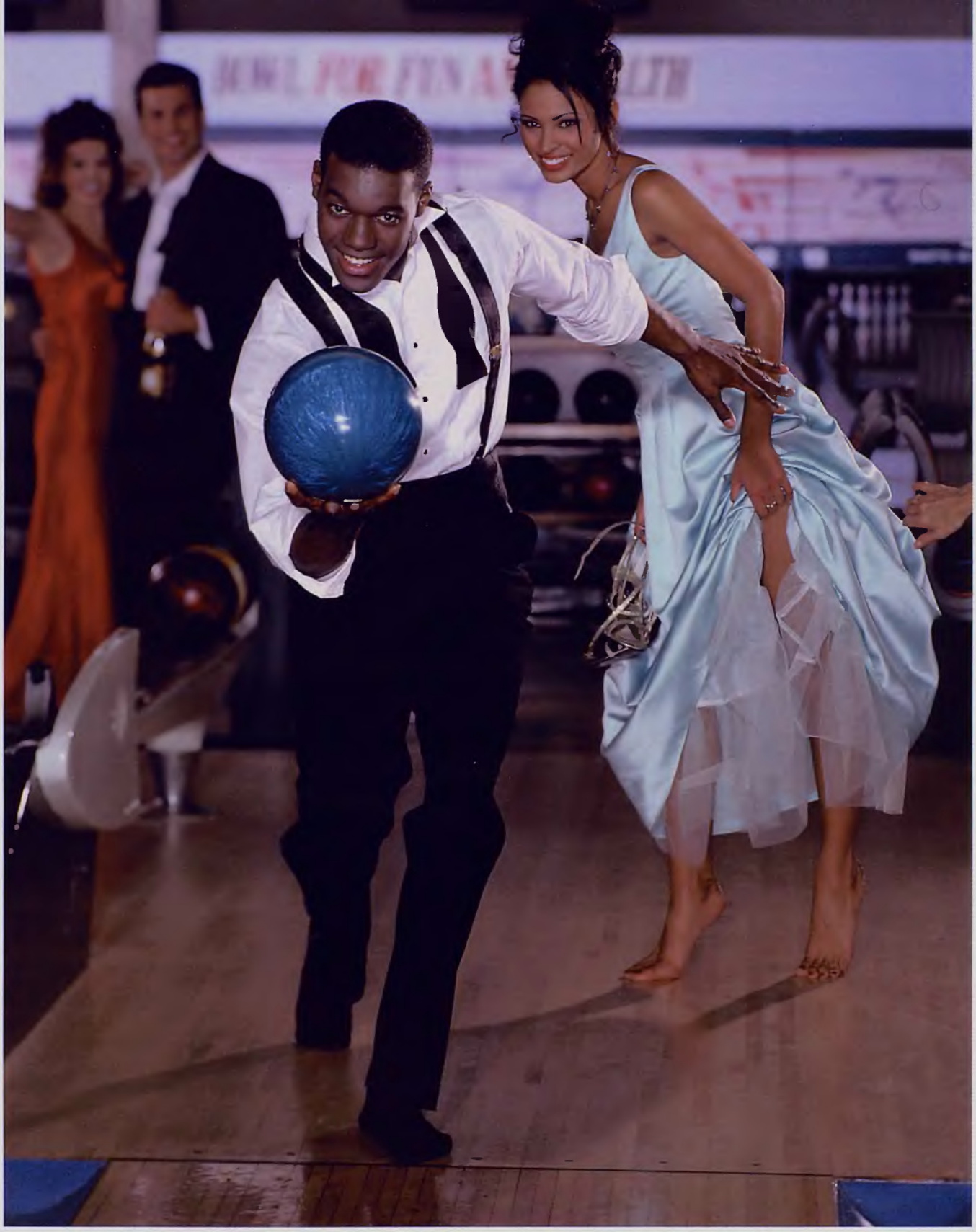
PLAYBOY: How do you divide your job as parents?

KLINE: At the moment Phoebe is very happy being a mom and letting me do the play. We have agreed to alternate so that we're never working at the same time. As it has turned out, whenever it's been her slot to work, Phoebe has chosen to stay with the children. She feels it's the right thing to do, and I love her dearly for it. She says, "Our children are only going to be young once." Anyway, Phoebe is going to look 20 for another 30 years. She made some kind of pact with the devil or something. She could still play Nina in *The Seagull* ten years from now, though she has put acting on hold. If something absolutely irresistible came along and it was shooting in the summer and the kids weren't in school, she might consider it. Short of that, she's doing the hard work.

PLAYBOY: Have you ever been tempted by the Hollywood lifestyle?

KLINE: We would never leave New York. The theater is here and so is Phoebe's

(concluded on page 159)



WHAT SORT OF MAN READS PLAYBOY?

He's a man who knows how to celebrate. The evening started with flowers and a limo, then it was dinner at the new champagne-and-caviar bistro, followed by a late-night jazz club. To top it off, the party went bowling. PLAYBOY readers are a breed apart when it comes to after-hours fun. Close to 5 million of them dine out or go to bars and nightclubs. That's more than the readers of *GQ* and *Esquire* combined. PLAYBOY—every month it's a strike. (Source: Spring 1997 MRI.)

"I'VE GOT A HOSTAGE"

What Phil Panzarella says can lead to murder and suicide. In conversation, he adopts the kind of tone you can imagine Bogart or Cagney taking when offering curt assurances there will be no more trouble from the likes of Legs Diamond. His voice is capable of rich inflections of empathy and irony, but its primary quality is blunt force, and Panzarella can wield it like an angry drunk with a crowbar. A New York Police Department lieutenant in his 33rd year of service, Panzarella has the resources of a 38,000-member, multibillion-dollar police department at his disposal, but it is his voice alone on which he depends in his role as a hostage negotiator, on those unexpected occasions that demand it. "One of the first things you learn is you can't learn it," he says. "But I had good teachers."

As he sees it, a negotiator needs an ear for nuance, a knack for reading a conversation and the ability to follow a train of thought through surreal detours. Sometimes a negotiator will talk and listen for days on end as the words float back and forth. The communication can be rudimentary, until the hostage taker is drawn in on human terms and begins to see his (and his captives') condition through the prism of another

they're words

no cop wants

to hear—and

the signal

to send in the

nypd's crack

talk team

TRUE CRIME

BY EDWARD CONLON

ILLUSTRATION BY MIKE BENNY

sensibility. The negotiator may then have the leverage—through sympathy or sheer persistence—to induce the release of the hostages. Intimidation has its place, which is one reason psychologists often consult but never negotiate directly. Though negotiations are a kind of emergency therapy, few qualified therapists allow sniper teams to play any part in a course of treatment.

Lieutenant Hugh McGowan, the commanding officer of the Hostage Negotiation Team, is judicious in both his praise and his use of Panzarella, who is one of his senior negotiators. "It's not as if I wouldn't use Phil if I wanted to go in soft," he says in the diplomatic and slightly defensive tone of a breeder of prize dobermans. "It's just that he's particularly good at the other way."

Panzarella admits that his belligerent approach masks grave anxiety as he threatens and pleads for the lives of strangers. But then he dismisses his own fears: "When I'm on the phone, I'm not going to get hurt. I've been in the hall when shots have come through the door, and it's asses and elbows to get out of the way." But even Panzarella seems to view himself as a kind of last resort. He refers to his deployment by McGowan in one hostage barricade with unself-conscious admiration: "It was a gutsy call."

•

Edwin Lamage showed up unexpectedly at Christine Hogan's apartment in Far Rockaway, Queens one frigid evening in early January 1995. Hogan found it rude, strange and entirely unwelcome. Even by her standards, it was a chaotic scene: She had just fed ten children—her son, grandchildren and a neighbor's kids, all under nine years old—and was doing the dishes while the kids ran riot in a post-Christmas trove of toys. Her boyfriend, Garrick, was in bed with the flu. Lamage had dated Christine's sister Mary, who lived several blocks away. Christine thought it odd that he hadn't looked at Mary's house first. Then again, she had never been glad to see him. He had a sarcastic, superior way of talking and an oafish, scruffy look, with a bushy moustache and thick glasses. Though he dressed a notch above skid row, he carried himself with the injured dignity of someone passed over, yet again, for employee of the month. When he offered to pay the cab fare for someone to get Mary, no one took him up on it. Lamage used the bathroom and told them, as he left, that they were out of toilet paper. Christine sent a daughter to buy some. A neighbor, Latasha Thomas, stopped in to pick up her three children just before Lamage returned with Mary. Over the noise of the dishes, the TV and the children, Christine heard him yell at Mary for seeing another man. When Mary insisted Lamage leave with her, he produced a .22 revolver and threatened to kill everyone. The domestic mayhem erupted into terror.

Mary tried to shove Lamage outside, and one of the children ran for the door. Lamage grabbed for him, but Christine managed to herd him with the rest of the children into the back room where Garrick lay. She made them get down on the floor, stuffing as many under the bed as would fit, then screamed out the window for help. Latasha threw out a note that said "Please call the police!" When two police officers arrived at the door, Lamage had Mary in a choke hold, with a gun to her head. He shouted, "Back off! I'll kill her! Nobody's leaving!"

There wasn't much else to say. They withdrew, called for backup and were joined by about 50 other police officers, who sought to convince Lamage to do no harm.

The Hostage Negotiation Team is called out roughly 100 times each year, but only a few incidents result in sustained hostage barricades. Hostage takers fall into three categories: "crusaders, criminals and crazies," though the distinctions obviously aren't rigid. As McGowan explains, "Sometimes people claim to be terrorists, but they're really just out for money, and they also happen to be as crazy as bedbugs." Eighty percent of hostage situations involve "emotionally disturbed persons," and the remainder are primarily the fallout of robberies gone awry. Everything a negotiator does runs counter to the traditional police response to crises. The instinct to react, assert control and meet force with superior force can be disastrous, as was demonstrated in Waco, where 80 followers of Branch Davidian leader David Koresh were immolated after federal agents raided his compound. Sometimes force is necessary to end a barricade, but for the most part the strategy is one of listening, talking, giving in whenever possible and, above all, waiting.

Waiting was not pleasant in Far Rockaway on the night of January 3. The temperature had dipped below freezing, and Rockaway was strafed with northerly winds. The neighborhood is one of red-brick housing projects, ramshackle colonial houses and vacant lots, and has the desolate calm peculiar to beach towns in winter. The Hogans lived on the top floor of a seven-storied housing project. Police sealed off the area for several blocks around. The Emergency Service Unit, in heavy vests, helmets and midnight-blue commando gear, was deployed to rooftops, for surveillance and to secure areas in the line of fire. A door team of five ESU cops, armed with .12-gauge shotguns and MP5 machine guns, was at the entrance of the apartment, behind "body bunkers," or handheld ballistic shields. The Technical Assistance Response Unit coordinated communications among the police and began to secure the phone line in the Hogan apartment. Headquarters was set up in an apartment in the project next door, which offered a view of the Hogans' apartment and an adjoining roof. Detective Andrew Cardamone called to begin negotiations. "Hello, sir," he said. "What's going on here?"

The mind of a hostage taker is a cauldron of emotions—rage, dread, resentment, despair. His thoughts can range widely and wildly, from bitter childhood insults to visions of the electric chair that he believes, with whatever merit, awaits him. Negotiations are a process of containment and control, of making the hostage taker focus on the present and what he can do to get out of his predicament, rather than what inspired his actions or their consequences. The negotiator tries to establish a rapport, to represent himself as an ally and an opportunity for peaceful resolution. It is a truthful representation, as histrionic demands for a plane to Algeria or an interview with Dan Rather frequently melt away to their metaphoric cores, becoming simple pleas for release or recognition.

Cardamone began to talk to Lamage around 9:15, half an hour after the police responded. At that point, he didn't know Lamage's name, let alone anything of his past or personality. He didn't know how many people were inside, or where they were. Lamage told him that he was going to kill himself over Mary and other problems. Cardamone found him resigned rather than overtly hostile, though Lamage often hung up on him or put him on hold. As word spread, relatives, neighbors and busybodies began to call to find out what was happening, and the attention clearly provided Lamage with an emotional boost. When the father of Latasha's children called, there was a proud, peremptory note in Lamage's response: "Yes, I'm the gunman. I have your babies." He made calls to relatives and friends to broadcast his moment of relevance. Finally, Lamage announced his demands: a bucket of chicken, soda and the still-awaited toilet paper. Despite the pettiness of the demands, it was a breakthrough that provided Cardamone with an opportunity to truly negotiate rather than simply plead. He

(continued on page 80)

"Hold on a second—I've got a hair in my mouth."

hollywood is ringing for this southern belle

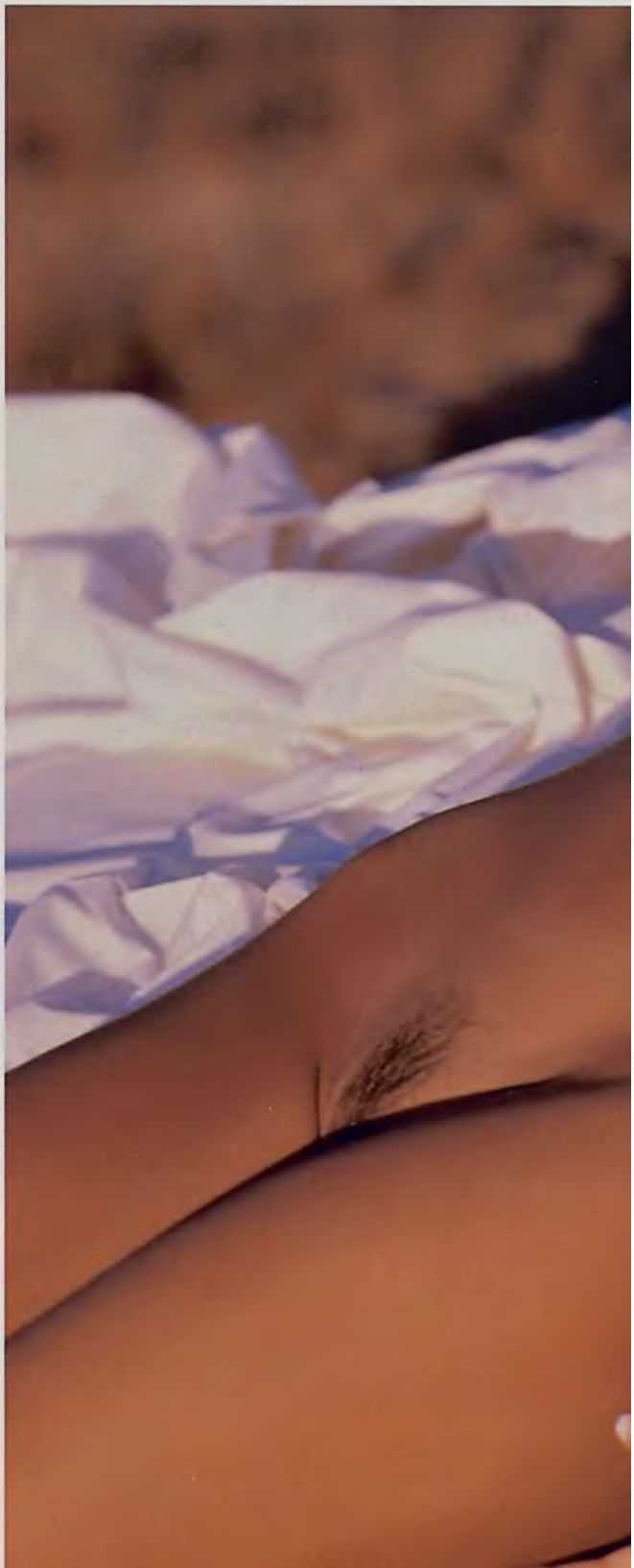
TWENTY-YEAR-OLD actress Jaime Pressly remembers the day she fell in love with performing. "I was three years old and in my first dance recital. I realized the crowd was laughing and clapping for me—that I was amusing them. It was the best feeling in the world." Seventeen years and a slew of dance lessons later, the daughter of Brenda (a choreographer) and Jimmy ("my hilarious dad") is a fast-rising star on-screen. So far she has appeared as Drew Barrymore's body double in *Poison Ivy* and snagged a three-picture deal with New Line Cinema, including the lead in *Poison Ivy: The New Seduction*. But life hasn't always been easy for this native of Kinston, North Carolina. When her parents divorced, Jaime went through "rebellious hell." The then 15-year-old clashed with her parents and headed to Japan to model for two months. "I grew up fast," Jaime says. Though she's making a name for herself in Tinseltown, Jaime will stay true to her roots. "You can take me out of the South, but you can't take the South out of me."

After shining as a body double in *Paisan Ivy*, Jaime starred as a "deceitful seductress" in *Paison Ivy: The New Seductian* (above). Jaime (thumbing a ride, right) says that though she's an optimist, she never gives rides to strangers. "That *Hitchhiker* series an HBO really freaked me aut," she says.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WAYDA

Jaime Pressly

"Seduction is in the eyes," soys Jaime, who hos yet to meet the love of her life. "If I wont somebody, it shows." What sort of man will sweep her off her feet? "He should be on the same intellectual level os me. He has to be family oriented ond to love kids." Jaime learned the importance of family three yeors ago when her sister Jessico was born. "After our not getting along for years, Jessica brought us all together. Now my relatives are my life. We leave family reunions with stomachaches from laughing so hard."



"I've lived on strength and guts for the past five years," says Jaime, a self-proclaimed "prissy tomboy" who has been on her own since she was 15 years old. "In Hollywood, people walk all over you with their spike heels if you let them. I have to keep my eyes open and not trust everybody. Out here, there's no such thing as Southern hospitality."

A Guy's Guide To Dating

in the intimidating postcollege landscape, here's how to keep your eyes on the prize. just follow the five indispensable rules that guarantee she will swoon with desire

By BRENDAN BABER And ERIC SPITZNAGEL

After college, dating becomes an increasingly complex and frustrating endeavor. Simply finding women is tough. Freaky as most college women seem, they aren't too difficult to track down. Just go to class or hang out at the local bar—you're bound to bump into one. And unlike in the real world, you're guaranteed to have something in common with them. You're both going to college—the *same* college—so you already have something to talk about. Even guys with limited imaginations can ask, "What's your major?" and probably do all right. It's a win-win situation that, sadly, doesn't exist outside the comfy confines of higher learning.

The problem with finding women in the outside world is that they're spread out all over the place. It may seem like an impossible dream, but rest assured, the woman of your fancy is out there somewhere. If you're willing to do some legwork and explore all the options, you may be able to track her down. The best thing you can do is visit places where single women congregate. Lucky for you we've already done your research and investigated the most popular pickup places.

BARS

Upside: Dim lights and beer goggles make her unlikely to react negatively to your appearance and will also make her more attractive to you. For the introduction-impaired, buying a drink provides an easy—if clichéd—entree. If you're both stupid you can always commune by the jukebox and bond over exchanges like, "Wow, you love No Doubt? *I* love No Doubt!"

Downside: Most women travel to bars in a herd, and you can expect the pack's defenses to be up. If they begin growling, do not raise your hackles, display your claws, fan your tail plumage or puff your neck sac. They're already wise to those tricks. Frankly, when in a bar, they're wise to every trick. A bar is to meeting women what "knock-knock" is to joke telling, so any attempt to talk will be construed as a hackneyed pickup. No matter how subtle and charming you think you are, you're coming off with the elegance of a giraffe on ice skates.

Bottom Line: A man on the make in a bar gives a woman the same sense of warmth and security she feels when she's being followed out of a car park at two A.M. Taverns are for drinking, playing pool and grunting at the moon. As for everything else, a great big "go easy" to you.

CLUBS

Upside: They are big, they are noisy, they're hip and they're chock full of beautiful bulimics. The music is so loud you don't have to *(continued on page 160)*

ILLUSTRATION BY ISTVAN BANYAI

HOSTAGE

(continued from page 70)

"We got you the chicken, it's going in, and you're going to let those fucking people go! Now!"

said he would do what he could, but told Lamage to let the children go. Latasha threw another note out the window, telling the police to hurry up with the chicken.

Inside the apartment, Lamage was wholly different from the small, sour voice on the telephone, complaining that life wasn't worth living and that dinner was late. For the most part, he remained in the bathroom with Mary. He insisted that one of the infants be brought to him. He yelled at the women in the bedroom and threatened to kill the children, one by one, if he wasn't fed soon. Christine heard thuds and cries from the bathroom—it sounded like Mary was being beaten. The children cried, too, though as time went on, some forgot the danger and began to play under the bed, poking at one another and giggling. Some dozed off. Christine's boyfriend, Garrick, was a figure of misery so extreme as to be almost comical: a hostage and the father of a hostage, bedridden with the flu, throwing up into the plastic bucket the children were using as a toilet. With Garrick there, Christine was aware that things could be worse.

Lamage repeated his threats. Christine urged him to let the children go, especially the asthmatic one. She showed him an inhaler to prove the illness was genuine, and Lamage decided to let him go, the first to be freed. Lamage then agreed to free four more. Latasha took the children to the door, and the ESU led them out. The door team—who stood in the hall, out of Lamage's line of sight—pumped Latasha for information on the hostages. She again told them, "Hurry up with the chicken."

Around 10:30, McGowan decided to move headquarters to an apartment two doors away from the Hogans'. The lines were cleared by the Technical Assistance Response Unit, and neither phone would receive calls except for those approved by the police. McGowan also decided to change negotiators. Cardamone confessed to feeling "a little jilted" as he joined the rest of the team.

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Several hours into the negotiations, the press had begun to gather. Half a dozen reporters waited, frozen and forlorn, aware that the close of the morning editions had passed hours earlier. TV crews gravitated toward their vans, and a few left to get coffee. Meanwhile, in the narrow living room of #7D, there were a Christmas tree, black plastic wall hangings of lithe African women, shelves decorated with family pictures and a toy stuffed parrot. There were also 20-odd cops: the TARU and the Hostage Negotiation Team in headsets and blue windbreakers; the ESU in helmets and flak jackets; and, in suits and ties, a sampling of the upper echelons of the NYPD. The Queens district attorney and the chairman of the New York City Housing Authority were also in the apartment, which combined the frenetic drive of a campaign war room with the awkward deference of a distant cousin's wake. One officer, of lower rank, grumbled that the coffee they had brought in didn't seem to make it past the bosses. The family who lived there did not leave—"Why should they? It's freezing outside," said a cop—and they tried to maintain as normal a routine as possible.

McGowan has about a hundred negotiators on call, all city detectives trained in the discipline. In most cases, he no longer negotiates himself but instead stands to the side to observe and make decisions with the benefit of distance. McGowan, a 29-year veteran whose silver hair, wire-rimmed glasses and habit of wry understatement contribute to his professorial manner, broke his composure with only an occasional comment or quick frown. There was cause for hope: Five hostages were out. Violence tends to occur in the first hour of a barricade. McGowan next tried Detective Carlos Gonzalez, telling him to continue in the same easygoing manner Cardamone had displayed. Gonzalez made a brave start, but Lamage, who grew increasingly irritated without his food, hung up on him. McGowan decided to change his tactics, sharply, and put on Phil Panzarella.

Broadly built, broader still in his vest, Panzarella sat back in his chair, holding an unlit cigar with self-mocking confidence, like a boxer who throws a combination for the crowd. Gonzalez, now his coach, wore a headset and held a notepad, and two more negotiators stood by, available for relief.

McGowan signaled for Panzarella to call, and Lamage picked up. He was made instantly aware of the change: "Listen, you fuck!" Panzarella yelled. "You're going to let those people go now! They got me out of bed for this bullshit! We got you the chicken, it's going in, and you're going to let those fucking people go! Now!" The gambit was a tremendous risk, but the stress of negotiations had worn Lamage down. McGowan had guessed that Lamage's choice of women and children as victims, together with his prison experience, indicated that he would defer when confronted by a dominant personality. Simply put, Lamage was a bully and would respond like one. When Lamage stammered, "I have to think about it!" and hung up, it was a sign of submission as unmistakable as a dog's lowered tail.

After the initial confrontation, Lamage recovered somewhat, and Panzarella continued his brusque, aggressive tack. The two quickly fell into a familiar routine, as the relative force and weight of each personality became clear: "But you ain't listening to me," Panzarella said in a tone of fraternal aggravation. "I'm telling you, open the door and let everyone out, and the thing is over. Then you and me will sit and talk this thing out. There ain't no sense in letting this bullshit go on all goddamn night, because eventually something else will happen, and you're going to get your ass in more trouble, brother. You've got to open the door sooner or later."

As Panzarella probed for weaknesses, Lamage began to experiment with defensive lines of argument. After taking a breath, he quietly demurred: "Not if I kill myself first." In a sense, he was a hostage too.

"That ain't got nothing to do with anything, understand?" said Panzarella, judiciously shifting from abuse to praise like a bad parent. "You're the man. I want you to be the man!" When Lamage tried to speak, Panzarella cut him off again, shouting, "The chicken's here! We got it right here, I'm telling you!"

"Well, bring it back."

"It's right by the door, like I said."

Lamage paused, and a bold note crept back into his voice. "Let Ja bring it." Jalila had been out when Lamage took her mother and family hostage, and was now in the apartment with the negotiators.

"No, Ja can't bring it. I'll put it right by the door, and I——" Panzarella put down the phone. "Fuck. He's off." When Lamage picked up again, Panzarella tried a tentative, injured tone: "Eddie! Eddie! What you hanging up on me for?" His voice hardened: "I don't hang up on you, do I? Do I? What the fuck you hanging up on me

(continued on page 86)

"Is that all I am to you? Just another piece of exercise equipment?"

TREND SPOTTING

FROM THE RUNWAY TO YOU: OUR BEST-OF-SHOW DESIGNER PICKS FOR SPRING

FASHION
BY HOLLIS WAYNE

FOR MOST men, fashion is like grammar. The average guy knows when something is right or wrong—he just can't explain why. This is particularly true when it comes to the type of subtle shifts that define spring 1998. We've sifted through the endless variations in each designer's new collection to acquaint you with the broader trends. You'll be happy to know that designers are in synch about color: Think brown, khaki and tan and lighter tones of pale. You will also want to buy a pale, striped rep tie. Spring means lightweight fabrics, but this season you'll see and feel materials with plenty of texture. Look for tone-on-tone plaids, and make sure the patterns are small. Soon, you too will be giving lessons on the elements of style.

From left to right, some runway hits: Forgo o penguin suit and wear a three-piece outfit in midnight blue. The wool jacket (this page, $1350), matching tuxedo trousers ($610) and silk shirt ($510) are subdued efforts from Versace. "The new jacket shope removes some of the traditional construction," says Hugo Boss creative director Lothor Reiff. The three-button wool suit (center) costs $925, the dress shirt is $175 and the striped tie is $B5, all by Boss Hugo Boss. "Spring 1998 has a reloxed feel," says Calvin Klein. "The emphosis is on wider-legged flat-front pants worn with a stronger-shouldered three-button jacket." In the Calvin Klein combo at far right, the tie with center seom ($100) is matched to the suit ($1B95), and the linen-and-silk shirt hos what we call surface interest ($225).

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAN AND CORINA LECCA

HUGO BOSS

CALVIN KLEIN

ARMANI

JOSEPH ABBOUD

It's the attack of the killer DBs (the increasingly fashionable term for double-breasted jackets). The new jacket model of note comes from Armani (far left). It's a double-breasted suit with a fly front ($1795), paired with a textured T-shirt ($400—you read it right—also by Armani), which is a great way to get extra mileage out of a classy suit. "My spring line is a collection of wardrobe pieces," Armani says. "Each has an identity that can stand alone or be mixed with other pieces." Joseph Abboud likes the easy look of a DB sports jacket with shirt and tie. "Sports coats are the next step in the evolution from casual Fridays to corporate casual," says Abboud. "Vests are also an element of personal style." Call his outfit here (center) casual elegance. It's a six-on-two linen sports jacket ($425), tan linen vest ($160), khaki pinstriped cotton shirt ($68), silk tie ($75) ond double-pleated trousers ($200), all by Joseph Abboud. Another way to personalize your new spring look is with accessories. Jewelry works, and so do pocket squares. In the photo at right, Ralph Lauren has gone all out, combining a golden watch fob slipped through a lapel with a dapper pocket square. "It's about an easy, sexy kind of glamour and a timeless sense of style and luxury," he says. The suit is a cotton-and-linen blend ($1040), the dress shirt has a moderate spread collar ($95) and the ring-patterned tie is silk ($50). All are by Polo by Ralph Lauren.

WHERE & HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 150.

HOSTAGE

(continued from page 80)

Christine maintained a kind of stunned calm. She took her pills and bided her time.

for?" He then said, half as a dare, "I thought we were talking man to man here."

"Yes," allowed Lamage. Whenever Lamage agreed with him, it was a small victory, and Panzarella continued to advance the premise of their personal bond: "How old are you?"

"Thirty-one."

"Thirty-one! OK, I'm 50 fucking years old here! I ain't over here hanging up on you, am I? Now listen to me. You got to talk to me, you got to let these people go, OK? You want, you and me can eat the chicken together—that's fine. But you got to help me out here. You listening?"

There was noise in the background, and Lamage shouted, "I'm talking to the police!" In the harried tone of a chaperon at a high-school dance, he explained, "I was talking to Ja's mother."

"Oh, Ja's mother. How's Christine doing? 'Cause she's a sick lady. She could die at any minute. She's got high blood pressure and shit."

"She just took her pill," Lamage said with concern. "She's all right."

"She took her pill, but you ain't helping the situation any. Who's doing the shitting in there that you need all the shit paper?"

"Mary. She's right here. She's got the runs."

"Well, she's probably scared. Why don't you ask her if she's scared." Though Panzarella was reluctant to let Lamage disengage from the conversation, it was unavoidable at times, and he took advantage of those moments to highlight the pain of the hostages. Lamage had begun to mimic the gestures of a caretaker, and Panzarella encouraged him. When Lamage asked, "Mary, are you scared?" there was an affirmative grunt in the background. "She said she's scared."

"You bet your ass she's scared," Panzarella said, reminding him of all the commotion he had caused. "You got a hundred goddamn people out here, a lot of people tied up. Eddie, come on, people can't even get into the building. We can't go on like this all night. Don't do this shit to me. I got to go home! I'm tired, man!"

"I'm tired too."

"I know! But come on, man, don't give up on me like this!"

"I already let five go. When Ja brings the chicken——"

"Ja can't. Want me to bring the chicken over there?"

"No, 'cause you're a cop."

"What's that got to do with anything?"

"You're a man with a gun."

"I'm over here talking to you, trying to help you out of this thing. We're going to do this together. If we don't do it together, it ain't going to get done." Lamage took a breath and Panzarella pressed on. "I'm telling you, these people are getting pissed off out here. I'm in the middle with you, and I'm getting my fucking ass reamed here, all right? You're inside there waiting to eat chicken, I'm waiting here to go home. And these people, they're beating the shit out of me now."

"We're hungry. Christine already went to the door three or four times."

"Listen to me, goddamn it, she's out of this goddamn thing. It's you and me here. And we got to work this out. We'll do it our way. You and me, we're on the same goddamn team here—nothing will happen unless I say it happens and you say it happens. We're the only two fucking people that count in New York City. You and me on this goddamn phone. Are you listening to me?"

While it was frustrating to haggle over the mechanics of a chicken delivery, that didn't mean the dialogue had deteriorated. The hostages hadn't been injured. Lamage was contained in the apartment, and his relationship with the negotiator seemed to deepen, consuming a greater share of his attention. The food began to take on great symbolic importance, and its arrival would allow Lamage a benign measure of victory. Moreover, he had changed his cast of mind, at least in part, from thoughts of murder-suicide to expectations of dinner. Panzarella appealed to Lamage's putative decency, trying to transform the contest of wills into a collaborative release of the hostages. He and Lamage were in oddly similar positions, trapped on the phone in small crowded rooms, fatigued, flushed with adrenaline, hemmed in by an audience desperate to know where the conversation would lead.

"Nobody else is involved in this," Panzarella said. "Just you and me, all right? It's like I'm your goddamn best friend right now. I'm trying to help you do the goddamn right thing. Be the man everybody here tells me you are. They tell me that you're a real man, a stand-up guy. You been in the joint, did your time, came out without no bullshit, and now you're acting like some fucking teenage rap singer or something."

"It's like——"

"Punks do the shit you're doing in there! And I don't want you to be like that, OK? I want you to be a man. Everybody I spoke to downstairs said that Eddie's a good guy. Eddie had a couple of problems, but he took care of them, and he's the man. But this ain't helping nobody, what you're doing. So let me put the chicken by the door, Eddie."

"Ja brings it in."

"I'm telling you——"

"I will not——"

"Don't bring her up again! She's got nothing the fuck to do with this. I'm asking you, as a favor—I've been talking to you now for a long time. Do you trust me?"

"No, I don't."

"You got to trust me, because it's you and me."

"But I let five people go."

"I wasn't here then, goddamn it! I just got here—they called me from fucking home! If I had been here, you would have gotten the chicken immediately. Listen, Eddie, why the fuck do you think I'm so pissed off? I had to get out of my goddamn bed to come here. They called me in just to talk to you. I'm putting that chicken at the door, and don't say another goddamn word to me."

"Ja is——"

Panzarella took a chance and hung up, his doubts belied by the decisiveness of the act. Again, Lamage acquiesced, sending Latasha to the door for the chicken. The ESU handed it over, along with the soda and toilet paper.

Christine maintained a kind of stunned calm, minding the children in her apartment and urging Lamage to let them go. She took her pills and bided her time. Sometimes Lamage made Mary and the infant lie down on the floor, but when he felt threatened—as he did when he saw the door team hold a pole camera inside the apartment—he made Mary sit on his lap, and the infant on hers, as a double human shield. The door team pulled back the camera. He had told Latasha he would release her when the food came, but then reneged when diet soda was delivered instead of regular. After the switch was made, he let her take two more children and leave. Six hostages remained: Mary and the infant, and Christine, Garrick and two more babies in the bedroom.

After the release, Lamage became still more agitated. When Panzarella

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"I'm hot to trot."

The 25 Best Restaurants In America

By Gerry Dawes

A LOT HAS CHANGED since our Critics' Choice lists of America's best restaurants were first published in the early Eighties. On those lists, the most recognizable names were André Soltner of Lutèce and Alice Waters of Chez Panisse, and ascending culinary stars Paul Prudhomme of K-Paul's Louisiana Kitchen and Wolfgang Puck of Spago. Many of the restaurants were French, some were Italian and only one, K-Paul's, was obviously heretical, though Michael's of Santa Monica pushed the

1. **RESTAURANT DANIEL**
   NEW YORK CITY
2. **FRENCH LAUNDRY**
   YOUNTVILLE, CALIFORNIA
3. **JEAN GEORGES**
   NEW YORK CITY
4. **CHARLIE TROTTER'S**
   CHICAGO
5. **PATINA**
   LOS ANGELES
6. **INN AT LITTLE WASHINGTON**
   WASHINGTON, VIRGINIA
7. **FRONTERA GRILL/ TOPOLOBAMPO**
   CHICAGO
8. **NOBU**
   NEW YORK CITY
9. **CHEZ PANISSE**
   BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA
10. **LE BERNARDIN**
    NEW YORK CITY
11. **LESPINASSE**
    NEW YORK CITY
12. **SPAGO**
    WEST HOLLYWOOD
13. **MANSION ON TURTLE CREEK**
    DALLAS
14. **GOTHAM BAR AND GRILL**
    NEW YORK CITY
15. **UNION SQUARE CAFÉ**
    NEW YORK CITY
16. **EMERIL'S**
    NEW ORLEANS
17. **VALENTINO**
    SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA
18. **AUREOLE**
    NEW YORK CITY
19. **FLEUR DE LYS**
    SAN FRANCISCO
20. **LE CIRQUE 2000**
    NEW YORK CITY
21. **NORMAN'S**
    CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA
22. **CAFÉ ANNIE**
    HOUSTON
23. **STAR CANYON**
    DALLAS
24. **COMMANDER'S PALACE**
    NEW ORLEANS
25. **LE BEC-FIN**
    PHILADELPHIA

ILLUSTRATION BY JEAN-PHILIPPE DELHOMME

envelope with its California (i.e., new American) cuisine.

Our last Critics' Choice list was published in 1987, in an era of such superstar chefs as Jean-Louis Palladin (Jean-Louis), Jeremiah Tower (Stars) and Anne Rosenzweig (Arcadia). Since then, many of these chefs have written books, starred on their own TV programs and moved on to manage restaurant empires.

We have included some of these chefs in our poll, along with food writers and restaurant critics. (The chefs were not permitted to vote for their own establishments. A complete list of names is on page 155.)

We have noticed some significant trends that have emerged from our secret ballots. The top three spots went to restaurants with French (or French-oriented) chefs—Restaurant Daniel, the French Laundry and Jean Georges—and a number of others are unmistakably French or French-influenced (Fleur de Lys, Le Bernardin, Lespinasse, Le Cirque 2000 and Le Bec-Fin). But one winner offers innovative Japanese cuisine, and another, Chicago's Topolobampo, has been called the "best Mexican restaurant in the world." The majority, though, are proud practitioners of the multifaceted cuisine of America. They include Charlie Trotter's of Chicago, the Inn at Little Washington in Virginia, the Mansion on Turtle Creek and Star Canyon in Dallas, Café Annie in Houston, Commander's Palace in New Orleans, Norman's in Coral Gables and Aureole in New York. Obviously, American cooking has evolved dramatically. Using revitalized native recipes and exotic produce from specialty food suppliers, as well as techniques, spices and ingredients from around the world, chefs working in today's American restaurants are crafting some of the most sophisticated food on the planet. Significantly, many of the best French chefs are working in America—Daniel Boulud, Jean-Georges Vongerichten and Palladin, among others.

In our 1987 survey, ten of the top 25 restaurants were in New York City. This year there are nine, only two of which are repeats: Le Bernardin and Le Cirque. California had six winners, while Chicago had three. The rest of the votes went to stellar establishments in such far-flung culinary corners as Houston, Dallas, New Orleans, Coral Gables, Philadelphia and Washington, Virginia. A list of near winners and regional favorites is on page 156.

Finally, all this culinary success does not come cheaply. Prices at several of the restaurants on our Critics' Choice list are stratospheric. Some entrees top $40, tasting menus have surpassed the $100 mark and as to the cost of a great bottle of wine: If you have to ask, you shouldn't be ordering. One wine steward informed us that he had sold eight $6000 bottles of Château Petrus since Labor Day. Congratulations to our winners, the best restaurants in America for 1998.

(1) **Restaurant Daniel,** 20 East 76th Street, New York City (212-288-0033). Daniel Boulud takes the spot previously occupied by André Soltner of Lutèce as the owner of our Critics' Choice for Best Restaurant in America. Restaurant Daniel's food is French with an American accent and as good as that found in any three-star *Michelin* restaurant in France. Like all great chefs, Boulud uses fresh seasonal produce to create such exceptional dishes as *soupe glacée de concombre* (a cool, creamy gazpacho-like soup with bits of smoked salmon, pink radishes, diced cucumber and Sevruga caviar) and *cabillaud rôti* (roast cod in a cockle-and-parsley broth with summer root vegetables and a cranberry-bean brandade). The 500-bottle wine list leans to expensive French wines but also includes reasonably priced regionals. Daniel's desserts maestro, François Payard (Boulud's partner in the hot new Payard Patisserie and Bistro on New York's East Side), creates delicate cold fruit soups, ethereal meringues, a creamy star-anise zabaglione and a to-die-for coconut sorbet in a chocolate shell with pineapple. The cost of dinner for two? Who cares?

(2) **The French Laundry,** 6640 Washington Street, Yountville, California (707-944-2380). The kudos and awards for this Napa Valley restaurant are practically unprecedented. *New York Times* restaurant critic Ruth Reichl recently called it "the most exciting place to eat in the U.S.," and the James Beard Foundation named the owner, Thomas Keller, America's best chef for 1997. Keller's artistic, intensely flavored food is served at a leisurely pace (dinner can take three hours) in multiple courses of small, often whimsically named portions. The five-course dinner and the ten-course chef's tasting menu usually begin with a medley of amuse-gueules: perhaps a quail's egg in brioche with caviar, and tastes of varied soups (sweet pea with truffle oil, puree of cranberry beans or lobster bisque). The multicourse meals begin in earnest with dishes such as "oysters and pearls" (select oysters with tapioca and Sevruga caviar) and "tongue in cheek" (a tower of braised beef cheek, veal tongue, baby leeks and mâche with horseradish cream). The wine list includes a large selection of half bottles to allow different combinations with various courses. Try to dine outdoors in the courtyard.

(3) **Jean Georges,** One Central Park West, New York City (212-299-3900). Jean Georges had been open less than six months in 1997 when our critics voted it the best new restaurant in America. The elegant decor in the 64-seat formal dining room complements Jean-Georges Vongerichten's aromatic food, which is enticingly flavored with emulsions, infused oils and such exotic native ingredients as Upstate New York forage greens, herbs and roots. Grilled shrimp atop borlatti beans laced with a pepper-infused sherry vinaigrette is terrific. Jean Georges offers a large wine list, primarily French and California bottles. Menus include à la carte, a $45 prix fixe luncheon, a four-course $78 prix fixe dinner and a chef's degustation for $105.

(4) **Charlie Trotter's,** 816 West Armitage Avenue, Chicago (773-248-6228). Chef and owner Charlie Trotter dedicated his third book, *Charlie Trotter's Seafood*, to "the true giants of the food world," including James Beard, Paul Bocuse and Julia Child, "from whose shoulders many of us enjoy a spectacular view." The next generation of chefs will be enjoying the view from Trotter's shoulders. However, duplicating the 37-year-old's culinary vision will prove to be difficult. Trotter serves two multicourse degustations, a $95 grand menu and a $70 vegetarian menu (both dinner only) at his two-story, turn-of-the-century townhouse. He prefers to use free-range meat, line-caught fish and organic vegetables, and likes to start his patrons off with half a dozen small offerings before beginning the parade of colorful, beautifully constructed courses. Trotter minimizes the use of butter and cream in his sauces, favoring light reductions, vegetable vinaigrettes and aromatic infusions to flavor his creations. And he matches his food with an extensive list of fairly priced wines.

(5) **Patina,** 5955 Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles (213-467-1108). In a town where everyone wants to be the top banana, German-born chef and owner, Joachim Splichal, has become the top potato. He has parlayed his consummate skills with spuds (potato spaghetti, potato ravioli, etc.), among other ingredients, into a seven-restaurant operation led by Patina. The French- and California-inspired dishes on Patina's inventive, often humorous menu include monkfish lasagna (made with thin layers of potato instead of pasta) and, under the heading Odd Things, beef marrow with "potato bone" and oxtail jus. In addition to the à la carte menu (you can spend as little as $40 for a four-course lunch), Splichal offers a

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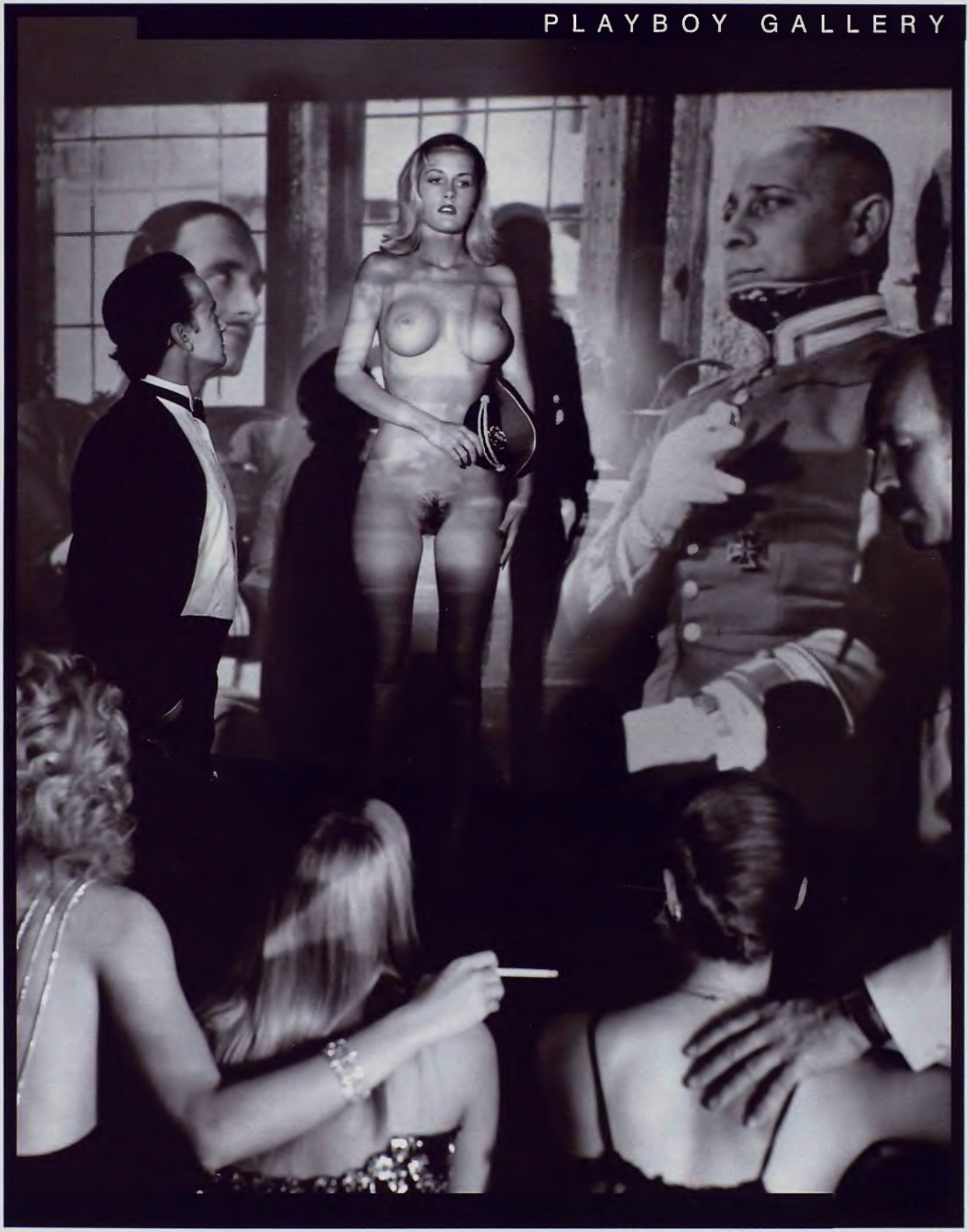

Helmut Newton reigned as the king of kink, injecting eroticism into fashion and showing a robust appetite for sex. A frequent contributor to PLAYBOY, he had never captured a Playmate on film—until September 1987, when he shot nine for a feature entitled *Helmut Newton's Playmates*. Above, Miss May 1986 Christine Richters poses in the Playboy Mansion West screening room. Her uniformed escort is Erich von Stroheim in Jean Renoir's classic film *The Grand Illusion*.

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How good is the food? Dinner guests have been known to fly in by helicopter.

$65 tasting menu, a $69 seafood menu and a $59 vegetarian menu. The huge, award-winning wine list focuses on Bordeaux, California chardonnay and cabernet sauvignon. The spirits list is larger than most wine lists.

(6) **The Inn at Little Washington,** Middle and Main Streets, Washington, Virginia (540-675-3800). Ornate, elegant, tasteful and stylish describe the Inn at Little Washington, housed in one of the world's greatest inns. The romantic 12-room hotel is situated in the foothills of Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains (an hour from Washington, D.C.). How good is the food? Dinner guests have been known to fly in by helicopter just to sample the Inn's French American cuisine, and the James Beard Foundation gave it its outstanding service award for 1997. Our critics raved about chef Patrick O'Connell's menu, which includes homemade boudin blanc with Virginia riesling–braised sauerkraut, and grilled black mission figs with cured local ham. Served on 24-kt.-gold-trimmed plates, many of O'Connell's creations are towering works of art that blend perfectly with the lavish decor. The extensive wine list is mostly American and French. The Inn's four-course prix fixe menu costs $88 (higher on Saturdays), and if you are staying overnight, a dinner reservation is guaranteed.

(7) **Frontera Grill** and **Topolobampo,** 445 North Clark Street, Chicago (312-661-1434). The more boisterous Frontera Grill and the quieter Topolobampo are sibling restaurants at the same address, overseen by owners Rick (also chef) and Deann Bayless. It's the Baylesses' dedication, skill and pursuit of culinary excellence that make their restaurants among the most highly respected in the country. The food at Topolobampo is Mexican, a delicious, authentic, regional variation. The Baylesses, authors of *Authentic Mexican* and *Rick Bayless' Mexican Kitchen*, are serious culinary historians. Their focus on the classic sauces that are the heart of Mexico's cuisine is reflected in the menus at both restaurants, which change biweekly. The $45 chef's tasting dinner at Topo might include *pibipollo de pescado*, a rustic Yucatecan tamal filled with flaked achiote-marinated snapper in an epazote-tomato-habanero sauce. At Frontera Grill, you can order *tostaditas* topped with lime-marinated marlin, or tacos *al carbón*, with wood-grilled marinated skirt steak, free-range chicken, Amish duck or catfish.

(8) **Nobu,** 105 Hudson Street, New York City (212-219-0500). In a lower Manhattan space with birch trees that soar to the ceiling, stenciled cherry blossoms on the floor and thousands of black river pebbles imbedded in a wall, Nobu Matsuhisa (and his chefs when he is not in town) performs for a glamorous audience, including business partner Robert De Niro. The highly original menu includes "new style sashimi," strips of salmon or other fish, garlic and scallions flash-cooked with a drizzle of hot extra virgin olive oil; and *tiradito* Nobu style, pulled raw red snapper topped with a piquant Peruvian-inspired yellow chili paste. Champagne or an Oregon pinot gris are good choices to accompany Nobu's $60-and-up *omakase* (chef's choice) menu. Reserve well in advance.

(9) **Chez Panisse,** 1517 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California (510-548-5525). Opened in 1971 as a neighborhood bistro, Chez Panisse is a classic modern American restaurant. Chef and owner Alice Waters, author of five Chez Panisse cookbooks, has won numerous awards (for her culinary expertise and her humanitarian efforts) and has inspired an entire generation of chefs. Waters buys only from suppliers who use ecologically sound methods to farm or raise food. Open for dinner only, Chez Panisse offers prix fixe menus that change daily, according to market availability. A weekend offering might include buckwheat blini and California white sturgeon caviar; grilled James Ranch lamb with cumin and coriander, roasted eggplant puree and garden salad; and caramelized pears and apples with hickory nut ice cream. Upstairs, the moderately priced café is open for lunch and has an à la carte menu featuring pizzas from wood-burning brick ovens.

(10) **Le Bernardin,** 155 West 51st Street, New York City (212-489-1515). Now more than a decade old, Le Bernardin is considered one of the world's finest seafood restaurants. Described by one critic as "New York's most grown-up dining experience," Le Bernardin, with its fine marine art, rich teakwood trim and gorgeous floral displays, is indeed a restaurant for adults. The staff treats you like a privileged guest in a private club. There are two multicourse tasting menus ($90 and $120) and a prix fixe menu ($68) featuring such dishes as crispy Chinese spiced red snapper with cèpes, aged port and a Jerez vinegar reduction. Expect to spend $150 to $200 per person, including wine.

(11) **Lespinasse,** 2 East 55th Street, New York City (212-339-6719). Celebrated chef Gray Kunz creates exotically flavored foods that spring from his extensive experience in Asian and European kitchens. Ingredients such as shimeji mushrooms, sawahani crabs, kokum (a fruit used in Indian cooking), lemongrass, squid ink and pineapple juice add subtle flavors and textures to Kunz' dishes. And while some of the dishes may make you wish for a gastronomic dictionary, the staff at Lespinasse is adept at answering questions about such menu items as pasta fiori with oriental greens, mustard oil and calamanci broth, and crudités of tuna, scallops, caviar and smoked salmon with wasabi-mirin emulsion. The $140 tasting menu can increase to $200 and includes a selection of four wines from the excellent, albeit expensive, list. (Château Le Pin 1982 for $10,000 anyone?)

(12) **Spago,** 1114 Horn Avenue, West Hollywood, California (310-652-4025). Spago has maintained its Critics' Choice ranking since 1984, only this time around one could easily be confused about which of chef and owner Wolfgang Puck's Spagos was the winner: the original Spago Hollywood, Spago Chicago, Spago Las Vegas or the new, dazzling Beverly Hills Spago? Although some critics voted for Spago Beverly Hills, most of our experts remained loyal to Spago Hollywood. It still has plenty of cachet, but because of the new Spago nearby, it's now more relaxed and reservations are easier to come by. S. Irene Virbila, the *Los Angeles Times* restaurant critic, suspects the break may be brief, as longtime regulars tire of the hectic pace at Spago Beverly Hills and drift back for Spago Hollywood's peppered Louisiana shrimp, and plum tomato, leek and basil pizzas. Lunch or dinner with a bottle of wine will cost at least $150 for two.

(13) **The Mansion on Turtle Creek,** 2821 Turtle Creek Boulevard, Dallas (214-559-2100). Picture yourself in a fashionable Dallas neighborhood, dining in an Italian Renaissance–style mansion. Built in the Twenties by cotton-and-oil tycoon Sheppard King, this former home now houses one of America's finest restaurants. The opulent dining room, once King's living room, features monumental fireplaces and hand-carved grapevines that wind around columns. Don't be surprised if

(continued on page 154)

"And for helping me complete my doctoral thesis,
I'll throw in a great blow job!"

BAYWATCH
LIFEGUARD

marliece andrada is tv's hottest new star

BAYWATCH ROOKIE

A YEAR AGO Marliece Andrada landed her first major television role, as a mermaid on *Baywatch*. Now the 25-year-old Californian is a regular member of the cast. She's the latest leggy beauty to star in the world's most-watched TV show.

We met Marliece on the beach in Santa Monica, California.

Q: What made you a TV star?

A: I crave attention. I love it when people watch me. Always have. Maybe that comes through on TV—that and my California-girl looks. I love to flirt with the camera.

Q: What do you think when people call the show *Babewatch*?

A: I thought it was funny the first 10,000 times I heard it.

Q: What's your role on the television show?

A: I play Skylar Bergman. She's a nature girl, like me. Sky is evolving. She'll go from rookie to EMT this year. It's a little overwhelming, being a regular on *Baywatch*. I'll be acting a scene and thinking, I am acting in the number one show in the world! But it's perfect for me. Now I can get attention from almost a billion people a week.

Q: How did you get the part?

A: The usual way, I auditioned. Of course, there was also the

On *Baywatch* Marliece saves lives and soaks up rays with style. The show has a worldwide audience of nearly a billion viewers a week, making Miss March one of the most-watched women on earth. "Keep looking," she says.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WAYDA

Once an extra, Marliece has moved up to star status on *Baywatch*. She practices her rescue tactics (above) but she never forgets that *Baywatch* watchers check out bods above all. "I work out constantly," says the former aerobics instructor from northern California. "I'm a vegetarian. I do all that I can to have an attention-getting body."

famous *Baywatch* water test. You have to swim against other actresses. The producers tell you to swim two laps across the *Baywatch* tank, one freestyle and one breaststroke. But I had no idea how to breaststroke! Luckily, I wasn't first in line. I watched the others and did what they did.

Q: Fastest actress gets the role?

A: No, other factors count more: talent, beauty and even the *Baywatch* look. That's the reason you have to swim the last ten yards of the test underwater and then burst out with your hair flowing back.

Q: How has celebrity changed you?

A: I'm still the same girl, except for a few perks. I have a trailer on the set, and when I'm on the road I get treated impossibly well. Once when I wanted to have a bowl of cereal at midnight, a limo driver came to my hotel and chauffeured me to the store to get my Special K.

Q: Playmates Pamela Anderson, Erika Eleniak and Donna D'Errico did the PLAYBOY-*Baywatch* double before you. Is that a lot to live up to?

A: Pamela, Erika and Donna are beautiful. I'm thrilled to be doing what they did. As for posing nude, what could be more natural? Nudity? No problem. I have no inhibitions.

I hate clothes. As soon as I get home every day I take off as many clothes as possible. Am I an exhibitionist? It depends on your definition. Maybe I'm

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To get closer to Marliece Andrada, you can call the Playboy Super Hotline. See page 160 for details.

Marliece has always been a performer. "As a little girl I was the family jokester and dancer," she says. While her seven siblings remained at home, Marliece set out for Hollywood, where she defied long odds to get where she is today. "Look at me now. I've arrived," she says.

just sexy and relaxed.

Q: Have you ever been in a situation where you needed to be rescued?

A: It's my fantasy. My father was a fireman and my boyfriend is a fireman. I dream all the time about being rescued. The idea makes me swoon. The one time I almost needed some help was when I let my boyfriend talk me into jumping off the San Clemente Pier. That's 50 feet straight down into the water. And we did it at night. When I hit the water, everything went black. But I didn't panic. I just held my breath until I figured out which way was up. And then I swam that way.

Q: What is your favorite piece of fan mail?

A: A letter of congratulations from my college. It didn't even mention my student loan.

MISS MARCH

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

NAME: Marliece Andrada

BUST: 35D WAIST: 24 HIPS: 35

HEIGHT: 5'7" WEIGHT: 118 lbs.

BIRTH DATE: Aug. 22, 1972 BIRTHPLACE: Manteca, CA

AMBITIONS: To continue to develop my career, always growing and always contributing to the art.

TURN-ONS: Mystery. I love getting to know a man and discovering all the nuances that make him special.

TURNOFFS: Bad breath, bad jokes, and being hit on at the gym. A girl's gotta sweat in peace!

MEMORABLE BAYWATCH MOMENTS: The day I was chosen, and getting my lip split open during an on-screen rescue. Ouch!

HOW TO WIN MY HEART: Be honest, Be easygoing. And I'm a vegetarian, so an authentic, vegetarian, Italian meal made by my man wouldn't hurt!

SEX SYMBOL SECRETS: Attitude! Any woman, no matter what size or shape, can be sexy if she believes she is.

The graduate

X-Country champ?

Raider Rah Rah?
1995-96

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

Whenever I take off my clothes my nipples get hard," the concerned young woman complained to her gynecologist.

"That's a little unusual," he said. "Get undressed and I'll check it out."

The doctor began to examine her breasts and nipples. After a considerable time touching and observing them, the doctor still looked puzzled. "Well, I don't know what you have," he finally said, "but it's contagious!"

How do you know when you've satisfied a redhead? She unties you.

PLAYBOY CLASSIC: Andy and Pete were having a slow round of golf. The two ladies in front of them managed to land in every sand trap, pond and rough on the course. Andy finally volunteered to ask them if he and Pete could play through. He walked up the fairway, got halfway to the ladies, stopped, turned around and came back. "I can't do it. One of those women is my wife and the other is my mistress," he explained. "Would you go talk to them?"

Pete took off toward the ladies, got halfway there, stopped, turned around and walked back to Andy. Shrugging, he said, "Small world, isn't it?"

Why are the people of New York City always so depressed? The light at the end of the tunnel is New Jersey.

An office manager walked into a tavern after work and instantly realized it was a gay bar. What the heck, he figured, I really want a drink.

The waiter walked over. "What's the name of your penis?" he asked.

"Look," the guy said, "I'm not into that. All I want is a drink."

"I'm sorry, but I'm afraid I can't serve you until you tell me the name of your penis," the waiter insisted.

"Oh, OK," the customer reluctantly agreed. "But tell me the name of your penis first."

"Nike," he responded. "You know, like, 'Just do it.'"

The customer thought for a moment. "The name of mine," he said, "is Secret."

"Secret?"

"Yeah. Like, 'Strong enough for a man but made for a woman.'"

THIS MONTH'S MOST FREQUENT SUBMISSION: A highway patrolman pulled over a carload of nuns. "Sister," he asked the driver, "why are you going so slow?"

"The sign said the speed limit is 22, Officer," the nun replied.

"No, the speed limit is 65," he explained. "This is Highway 22." The cop looked in the backseat and noticed that the other two nuns looked shaken and pale. "What's the matter with them?"

"We just got off Highway 99."

Why are more couples than ever filing for divorce? Tougher gun laws.

YOU KNOW YOU LIVE IN SAN FRANCISCO WHEN . . .

- You make more than $300,000 a year and you still can't find a nice place to live.
- The guy who cuts your hair is straight, and your plumber is gay.
- You can't remember if pot is still illegal.
- Your child's third-grade teacher has a nose ring and her name is Breeze.

Did you fake it that time, darling?" the man asked after making love to his wife.

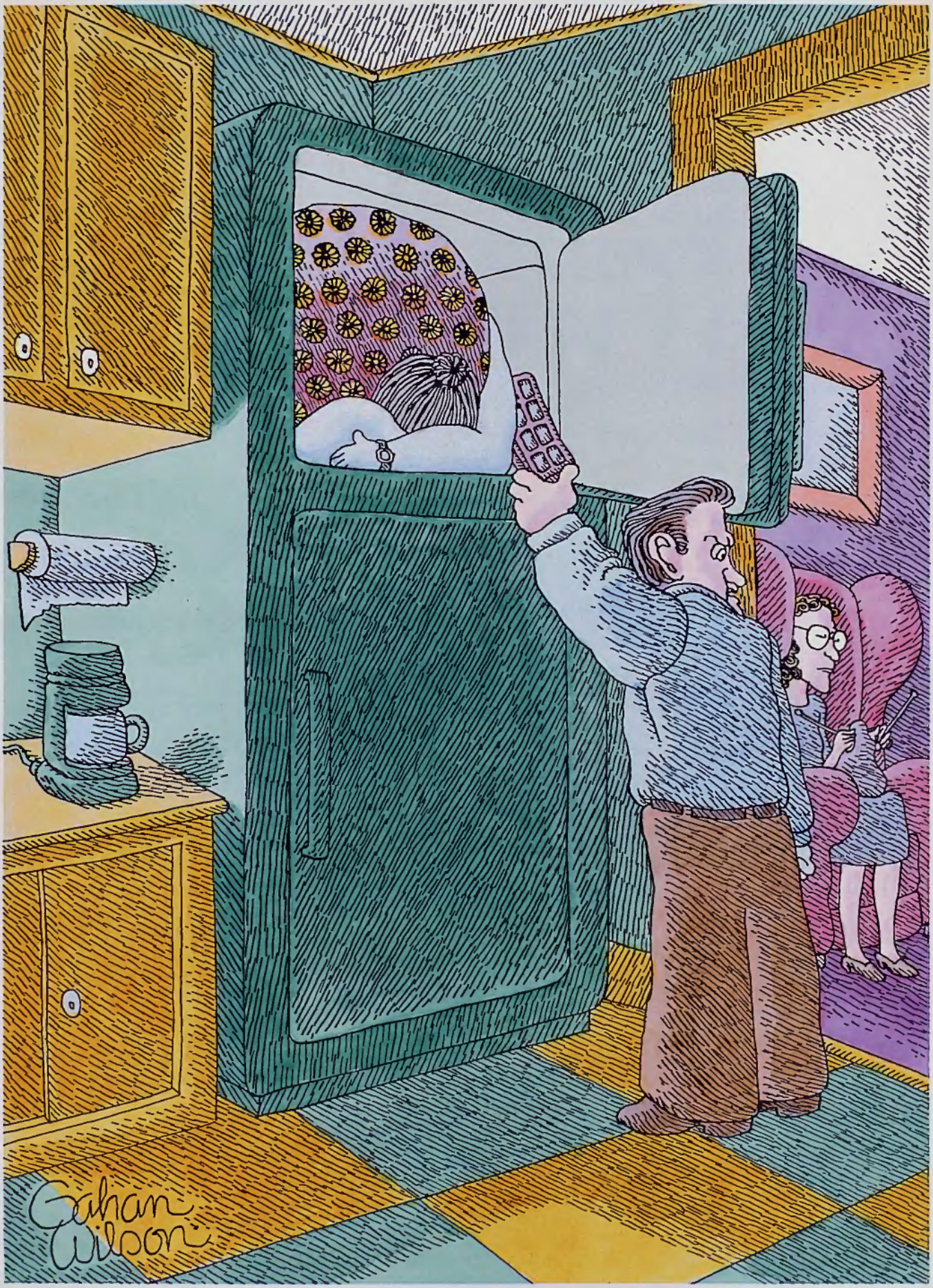
"No, dear," she replied. "This time I really was asleep."

OXYMORONS OF THE MONTH:

Resident alien
Legally drunk
Small crowd
Peace force

How are the president's pecker and his politics alike? They both turn 180 degrees when things get hard.

Send your jokes on postcards to Party Jokes Editor, PLAYBOY, 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611, or by e-mail to jokes@playboy.com. $100 will be paid to the contributor whose submission is selected. Sorry, jokes cannot be returned.



"Your mother's taking up too much freezer space!"

Keller's Last Refuge

uncle sam wants to hire a professional hit man—why?

fiction by Lawrence Block

Keller, reaching for a red carnation, paused to finger one of the green ones. Kelly green it was, and vivid. Maybe it was an autumnal phenomenon, he thought. The leaves turned red and gold, the flowers turned green.

"It's dyed," said the florist, reading Keller's mind. "They started dyeing them for St. Patrick's Day, and that's when I sell the most, but they caught on in a small way year-round. Would you like to wear one?"

Would he? Keller found he was weighing the move, then reminded himself it wasn't an option. "No," he said. "It has to be red."

"I quite agree," the little man said, selecting one of the blood-red blooms. "I'm a traditionalist myself. Green flowers. Why, how could the bees tell the blooms from the foliage?"

Keller said it was a good question.

"And here's another. Shall we lay it *across* the buttonhole and pin it to the lapel, or shall we insert it *into* the buttonhole?"

It was a poser, all right. Keller asked the man for his recommendation.

"Agreed, it's controversial," the florist said. "But I look at it this way. Why have a buttonhole if you're not going to use it?"

Keller, suit pressed and shoes shined and a red carnation in his lapel, boarded the Metroliner at Penn Station. He'd picked up a copy of *GQ* at a newsstand in the station, and he made it last all the way to Washington. Now and then his eyes strayed from the page to his boutonniere.

It would have been nice to know where the magazine stood on the buttonhole issue, but it had nothing to say on the subject. According to the florist, who admittedly had a small stake in the matter, Keller had nothing to worry about.

"Not every man can wear a flower," the man had told him. "On one it will look frivolous, on another foppish. But with you——"

"It looks OK?"

"More than OK," the man said. "You wear it with a certain flair. Or dare I say panache?"

Panache, Keller thought.

Panache had not been the object. Keller was just following directions. Wear a particular flower, board a particular train, stand in front of the B. Dalton bookstore in Union Station with a particular magazine until the client—a particular man himself, from the sound of it—took the opportunity to make contact.

It struck Keller as a pretty Mickey Mouse way to do things, and in the old days the old *(continued on page 116)*

PAINTING BY KENT WILLIAMS

OUT OF THE *Blue*

liven up your shirt rack with the color of the moment

It's royal, it's electric, it's true. From the courtroom to the sales desk, blue is becoming a popular alternative to workday white. A blue shirt is the perfect defense against suit-sneer (that oh-so-blatant look from women in trendy bars who are quick to peg you as a corporate casualty). Sure, you have to be careful about tie selection. But the loss of versatility is more than made up for by the bold style statement. All the shirts pictured here add a shot of color to the narrow slice of shirt and tie between your lapels (think of it as the critical V). Look for shirts with moderate spread collars and set them off with ties that have fat knots. And if people question your new blast of color, just tell them everyone goes through a blue period.

Fashion By HOLLIS WAYNE

Toke notes: Your loundry pile should look like this. The most important thing to shop for is color—keep on eye out for strong, rich and bold tones. We're not talking about your dod's pole-blue oxford. Moving from left to right, we hove an iridescent oxford by Volentino Uomo ($95) for the more fashion-conscious man. The finish gives it o nice untraditional sheen. Next in line is a microcheck by 8urberry ($59). Don't be afroid to match a subtle pattern with o potterned sports jocket. The detail is so quiet, this shirt looks solid. Overlapping it is a herringbone by Ermenegildo Zegna ($225; you're paying for a silky touch, rich texture and hond-finished details). It's tailored to fit close to the body and can be worn with the most sophisticated suits. The some goes for its neighbor and sibling—an iridescent chombroy shirt by Zegno (also $225). The grid-potterned shirt next to it is by Burberry ($85). It has French cuffs (they dress up any suit) and extra buttonhole work. We finish our blue review with o bird's-eye pattern from Geoffrey Beene ($40). It provides the perfect means to odopt the trend without getting taken to the cleaners. Yeah, that's the ticket.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHUCK BAKER

WHERE & HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 150.

20 QUESTIONS

JOHN PETERMAN

america's catalog cowboy on starting a business with a credit card, making stories to move merchandise and appreciating the ass-end of a 1935 auburn

He shares his name and his job as head of a catalog company with the Mr. Peterman character on "Seinfeld." While the fictional Peterman employs Elaine (Julia Louis-Dreyfus), the real John Peterman confronts a marketing challenge: how to convert all those "Seinfeld" viewers into customers. "About 70 percent of the people who know the name from the show don't know we're a real company," says Peterman. "We did research on it."

If "Seinfeld's" Peterman comes off as slightly eccentric, that may be because the show's writers find inspiration in the real Peterman's catalogs. With their watercolor illustrations and bits of fiction (ostensibly written by Peterman himself) woven around the merchandise, the catalogs have acquired status in the direct mail trade as "romance books." Think ocean liner travel, Paris between the World Wars and India during the British raj.

John Peterman is an example to all those who have dreamed about starting their own businesses or who didn't make the major leagues. After stints as a professional infielder and sales manager for packaged goods companies, he embarked on a career as a business consultant. On a trip to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, he spotted a cowboy duster in a dry goods store. The ankle-length coat, Peterman explains, provides total weather protection for guys on horses. Ever on the lookout for an entrepreneurial opportunity, Peterman, along with his New York adman partner, tested a couple of small magazine ads to see if the duster would sell. They moved 2500. A year later, in 1988, they brought out their premiere catalog, which offered the duster and three other items. In 1996 the J. Peterman Co. grossed an estimated $70 million. Peterman admits "the business is a little more organized" than in the early days.

Contributing Editor Warren Kalbacker dialed the J. Peterman Co. in Lexington, Kentucky and specified one John Peterman. His order was filled a couple of weeks later. Kalbacker reports: "Peterman and I met amid evidence of his travels: well-worn caps, coats and boots and a large collection of incredibly battered luggage. His office resembles a British country house but happens to be in a warehouse in an industrial park." Peterman comes by his brand of travel honestly, though. Says Kalbacker, "He urged me to avoid the interstate on my way back and penned a map of local country roads. He insisted I drive them right away because they're slated for widening."

1.

PLAYBOY: The duster is J. Peterman's signature. It even decorates the signs along the road to the company's headquarters. Did you begin wearing it as a reaction to the suit you wore as a business consultant?

PETERMAN: The basic motivation was rebellion. Being different has always been important to me. When I was in the Marine Corps, I never wanted to salute the officers. I was always trying to see whether they were looking. Could I get by them? "Oh! Didn't see you, sir. Sorry, sir." I got into a lot of trouble. When I was in the consulting business, I went to a store in Jackson Hole, Wyoming and bought the duster. I wore it back East and people would stop me and say, "God, where did you get that?" One time in Atlanta I was running from one plane to another and some guy who'd had a few drinks was holding on to the end of my duster. When I went to New York to visit my partner, he said, "Peterman, I like you better because you're wearing that." And I told him, "I've noticed that a lot of people like me better because I'm wearing this." And he said, "Let's run a couple of ads and see if we can sell some of them." I still wear the duster. I wore it yesterday and the day before that.

2.

PLAYBOY: To quote *Seinfeld*'s Mr. Peterman: "My stories sell these clothes." So you cleverly staked out your catalog territory with copy that reads like excerpts from novels, diaries and bar conversations?

PETERMAN: It wasn't the case of selecting a merchandising style. I bought the duster because it's different. It represents cowboys, and cowboys are big figures to me. I like cowboys. There is a lot of authenticity surrounding the duster because of where I found it. That's the kind of atmosphere we create with the stories that accompany the items. Polo can get emotion out of a photograph. But I didn't have $125,000 to put into a shoot. We did it the only way we knew. Most of the things we did weren't thought out.

3.

PLAYBOY: Peterman describes merchandise with references to F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway and Jane Austen, among others. Is there a future in the catalog field for English majors?

PETERMAN: You don't have to be an English major. I began reading those books in my late 20s, early 30s. I read Ian Fleming when I was in college. A woman called me with an idea to market the J. Peterman catalog to high school English teachers for use as part of the curriculum. And I told her that while I and some other people consider our copy to be literature, I was afraid that we would create controversy should we try to market it to English students. Talk about brainwashing. Teaching Peterman!

4.

PLAYBOY: Should she ever lose her $600,000-per-episode *Seinfeld* job, could Julia Louis-Dreyfus land a position at the J. Peterman Co.?

PETERMAN: She should submit examples of her writing. Then we'd have to decide whether she has sufficient talent to pursue it before we let her go on a journey to discover items. I know lots of interesting people who can't write a lick. Fitzgerald and Hemingway were good writers when they were young, and they got better. But even Hemingway and Fitzgerald sprinkled their fiction with facts and personal anecdotes. If you're really young you haven't had enough personal experiences to be very interesting. . . . I'm getting into an area I don't know anything about.

5.

PLAYBOY: When you met Donald O'Hurley, the actor who plays Mr. Peterman on *Seinfeld*, did you offer him advice on how to interpret you?

PETERMAN: He didn't ask for advice and I wouldn't give him any. And if he were to do something more like me it would probably ruin the character. I send him clothes every now and then. I told him I can't have him walking around shabbily dressed. Donald O'Hurley is a nice

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID ROSE

guy, but the character is an asshole. I have said that, but I've been misquoted. I never meant the actor was an asshole. I said his characterization of me makes me look like an asshole. But *Seinfeld* is good for the business in terms of name recognition. So, unlike the Soup Nazi, I'm not about to call the *Seinfeld* show and ask them to cease and desist. But when the Kramer's Reality Tour PR guy called and asked me to participate, I said no.

6.

PLAYBOY: You insist you don't discover Peterman items in fashion designers' showrooms. Tell us how creative you can be in finding the merchandise.

PETERMAN: The second item in the catalog—after the duster—was the J. Peterman shirt. I had always wanted big blousy sleeves on a shirt. The idea came from Errol Flynn. I was secure enough that it didn't make me feel prissy. So I started looking for a pirate shirt. I was going through a military history magazine and came across a shirt worn in the Jeffersonian era. And I said, "That's it!" Some people get it and some don't. A women's buyer, Paula, brought in a tennis dress from a vintage clothing show. We said we loved it but that it wouldn't sell. But she bitched and moaned and convinced us it was a Peterman item. So we put it in the catalog and it did extremely well. Here are woolen fisherman pants from the Aran Islands off Ireland. Great suspenders, high in the back. I would wear these, but I don't think I could sell many in the catalog.

7.

PLAYBOY: You're a veteran of Triple A baseball. Relate the lessons of the professional game.

PETERMAN: The lessons get more finetuned the further you go. When you're a professional and you play every day you have to be resilient. You can get beaten 10–0 today and win 10–0 tomorrow. Not letting failure bother me is a lesson I got from baseball. When you play infrequently, every game is a big deal. You see high school kids crying because they lost a game. That annoys me. I wanted my kids to care whether they won or lost, but I never wanted to see them cry because they lost a game. I was always on baseball teams that won more then they lost. I was an infielder. I had a tryout with the Yankees and I was signed by the Pirates and played in the rookie league and did very well. I went to Triple A the following year with the Columbus Jets. I had a good first year. Hit well and stole a lot of bases. But when they sent me my contract, I didn't sign it. This was before the era of agents. I wrote them a letter saying I wanted $50 for every point I hit over .300, and $50 for every base I stole over 30. And they told me, "You had a good year last year. Get your ass to spring training or you won't have a job." Boom, I signed my contract and went to spring training.

8.

PLAYBOY: You traveled to Cuba. Did you enjoy an audience with the maximum baseball fan?

PETERMAN: Fidel was busy the day I was there, so we didn't get together. And it was after baseball season, so I didn't go to a game. The only good thing I can say about socialists is that they're great preservers of things. Havana hasn't changed one iota since 1959. They never ripped anything down nor built anything up because they never had a lot of money. Some may call that backwardness, but I call it beauty. With one paint job you could have the most beautiful city in the world. There were some old cars, but the 1955 Chevys have all been sold to Germany or Japan. Good cigars and wonderful rum. Cohiba cigars. Fidel's brand. Good enough for Fidel and good enough for me. Here's where you go to buy your rum and your cigars—La Casa del Ron, Havana. It's a state-run store with a big cigar room and bottles of all the rums made in Cuba. There's a bar, and they have these little glasses. So go in there and sample six or seven rums, OK? Take 20 bottles of those and ten of those. Of course, you can't bring them back here. Peterman would never import anything illegally. Absolutely not. Right.

9.

PLAYBOY: Name three items every man should own.

PETERMAN: Every guy should have a winter coat with a cape on it. Very few do. It's distinguished, it's utilitarian and you don't necessarily look like you're in the kaiser's army. You look like Sherlock Holmes—or a count or a duke. That green loden one over there is my winter coat. A man should also have a pair of boots. Very important. I have a great affinity for cowboy boots. The third item would be a brush and shaving cream. I use them. None of this squeeze-top stuff. I won't go so far as to suggest shaving with a straight razor, but I've always wanted to do it.

10.

PLAYBOY: Early on, you managed to finance the J. Peterman Co. with credit card cash advances. Do you recommend this method of raising capital to young entrepreneurs?

PETERMAN: I wouldn't recommend it, but I wouldn't not recommend it. It's just lately, after I passed 50, that I've stopped maxing out my credit cards. It's not a habit one leaves easily. It's a good way to get into trouble. But there's a difference when you're an entrepreneur. You do what you have to if you need money to get the thing going. You get the money any way you can, legally. One of my fantasies is never to use another credit card. Pay cash for everything. But money clips have never held a lot of intrigue for me. I carry my money in a wad in my pocket. Folded over, sometimes with a paper clip.

11.

PLAYBOY: Does John Peterman ever ask for directions?

PETERMAN: I like finding my own way. Not from a macho egotistic standpoint, but from a love of discovery. I find lots of stuff when I'm lost. Paris and London are wonderful places to be lost. Bolivia is a good place to be lost. La Paz is a small town, so you can't really be lost, but you can't know where you're going. I found a real witches' market there. There were herbs and powders and potions and llama fetuses—anything you need for your basic witch kettle. I missed putting that stuff in the catalog.

12.

PLAYBOY: Describe the joys of traveling alone.

PETERMAN: You can go left instead of right without consulting anyone. I spent a weekend by myself in an 18th century Irish manor house and wound up in a wonderful road race. I was headed back toward Dublin on Sunday afternoon, and I was coming up on Gorey, which is about 50 miles away. I had rented an Opel. And there were a Mercedes and a Volvo on the road with me. First, the Mercedes slowed down, so I passed it, then the Volvo passed the Mercedes and me, and then the Mercedes passed me, and the next thing you know, we're doing 80 or 90 between little towns. The Volvo drops out. It was really wonderful—this Mercedes and me. We're downshifting around the corners, passing whenever we can, passing wherever we shouldn't—on the curves. And then you have to slow down to 15 miles an hour to go through towns. As soon as you hit the outskirts you're downshifting again to get back up to speed to try to get ahead of the other guy. We get all the way to Dublin and I pull up alongside the Mercedes. And there's this beautiful woman driving. She smiled, then she went right and I went left. I guess it was a tie. That wasn't important. The race was important.

(concluded on page 169)

Tom Dempsey

Keller's Last Refuge *(continued from page 108)*

"You're in our nation's capital. Take a tour of the White House. Slow down and smell the flowers."

man would have shot it down. But the old man wasn't himself these days, and something like this, with props and recognition signals, was the least of it.

"Wear the flower," Dot had told him in the kitchen of the big old house in White Plains. "Wear the flower and carry the magazine——"

"Tote the barge, lift the bale. . . ."

"And do the job, Keller. At least he's not turning everything down. What's wrong with a flower, anyway? Don't tell me you've got Thoreau on the brain."

"Thoreau?"

"He said to beware of enterprises that require new clothes. He never said a thing about carnations."

At ten past noon Keller was at his post, wearing the flower, brandishing the magazine. He stood there like a tin soldier for half an hour, then left his post to find a men's room. He returned feeling like a deserter but took a minute to scan the area, looking for someone who was looking for him. He didn't find anybody, so he planted himself where he'd been standing earlier and just went on standing there.

At a quarter after one he went to a fast-food counter for a hamburger. At ten minutes of two he found a phone and called White Plains. Dot answered, and before he could get out a full sentence she told him to come home.

"Job's been canceled," she said. "The guy phoned and called it off. But you must have been halfway to D.C. by then."

"I've been standing around since noon," Keller said. "I hate standing around."

"Everybody does, Keller. At least you'll make a couple of dollars. It should have been half in advance——"

"Should have been?"

"He wanted to meet you first and find out if you thought the job was doable. Then he'd pay the first half, with the balance due and payable upon execution."

Execution was the word for it. He said, "But he aborted before he met me. Doesn't he like panache?"

"Panache?"

"The flower. Maybe he didn't like the way I was wearing it."

"Keller," she said, "he never even saw you. He called here around 10:30. You were still on the train. Anyway, how many ways are there to wear a flower?"

"Don't get me started," he said. "If he didn't pay anything in advance——"

"He paid. But not half."

"What did he pay?"

"It's not a fortune. He sent us a thousand dollars. Your end of that's nothing to retire on, but all you had to do besides stand around was sit around, and there are people in this world who work harder and get less for it."

"And I'll bet it makes them happy," he said, "to hear how much better off they are than the poor bastards starving in Somalia."

"Poor Keller. What are you going to do now?"

"Get on a train and come home."

"Keller," she said, "you're in our nation's capital. Go to the Smithsonian. Take a tour of the White House. Slow down and smell the flowers."

He hung up the phone and caught the next train.

•

He went home and put his suit in the closet, but not before discarding the touch of panache from its lapel. He'd already gotten rid of the magazine.

That was on a Wednesday. Monday morning he was in a booth at one of his usual breakfast places, a Greek coffee shop on Second Avenue. He was reading the *Times* and eating a plate of salami and eggs when a fellow said, "Mind if I join you?" He didn't wait for an answer, either, but slid unbidden into the seat across from Keller.

Keller eyed him. The guy was around 40, wearing a dark suit and an unassertive tie. He was clean-shaven and his hair was combed. He didn't look like a nut.

"You ought to wear a boutonniere," the man said. "It adds, I don't know, a certain something."

"Panache," Keller suggested.

"You know," the man said, "that's just what I was going for. It was on the tip of my tongue. Panache."

Keller didn't say anything.

"You're probably wondering what this is all about."

Keller shook his head.

"You're not?"

"I figure more will be revealed."

That drew a smile. "A cool customer," the fellow said. "Well, I'm not surprised." His hand dipped into the front of his suit jacket, and Keller braced himself with both hands on the edge of the table, waiting to see the hand come out with a gun.

Instead it emerged clutching a flat leather wallet, which the man flipped open to disclose an ID. The photo matched the face across the table from Keller. The accompanying card identified the face as that of Roger Keith Bascomb, an operative of something called the National Security Resource.

Keller pushed the wallet back to its owner.

"Thanks," Bascomb said. "You were all set to flip the table on me, weren't you?"

"Why would I do that?"

"Never mind. You're alert, which is all to the good. And I'm not surprised. I know who you are, and I know what you are."

"Just a man trying to eat his breakfast," Keller said.

"And a man who's evidently not put off by all that scary stuff about cholesterol. Salami and eggs! I have to say I admire you, Keller. I bet that's real coffee, too, isn't it?"

"It's not great," Keller said, "but it's the genuine article."

"My breakfast's an oat-bran muffin," Bascomb said, "and I wash it down with decaf. But I didn't come here to put in a bid for sympathy."

Just as well, Keller thought.

"I don't want to make this overly dramatic," Bascomb said, "but it's hard to avoid. Mr. Keller, your country has need of your services."

"My country?"

"The United States of America. That country."

"My services?"

"The very sort of services you rode down to Washington prepared to perform. I think we both know what sort of services I'm talking about."

"I could argue the point," Keller said.

"You could."

"But I'll let it go."

"Good," Bascomb said, "and I in turn will apologize for the wild-goose chase. We needed to get a line on you and find out a few things about you."

"So you picked me up in Union Station and tagged me back to New York."

"I'm afraid we did, yes."

"And learned who I was, and then checked me out."

"Like a book from a library," Bascomb said. "Just what we did. You see, Keller, your uncle would prefer to cut out the cutout man."

"My uncle?"

"Sam. We don't want to run everything through what's-his-name in White Plains. This is strictly need-to-know, and he doesn't."

"So you want to be able to work directly with me."

"Right."

(continued on page 138)

PLAYMATE REVISITED: ERIKA ELENIAK

the real reason people watched "baywatch"

WHEN PLAYBOY introduced Erika Eleniak as Miss July in 1989, she had just taped a TV pilot about lifeguards. "It's just another job," Erika said then. Nine years later—who knew?—the show, *Baywatch*, is an international phenomenon and Erika is an international star. At the age of 28, she has appeared in TV series and movies, feature films (including *E.T.* and *The Beverly Hillbillies*) and on a CD-ROM, *Panic in the Park*. Although life hasn't always been a beach for the self-proclaimed wild child who decided to kick her bad habits at 17, we'll never forget how she heated up the sand.

Erika has earned three PLAYBOY covers (right) the hard way—by becoming a movie star. She most recently appeared in the 1997 TV movie *Heatwave*. Above, the daughter of a Navy man salutes fans as Miss July 1989. After giving good spandex as lifeguard Shauni McLain on *Baywatch* from 1989 to 1992, Erika ditched the red swimsuit for bike shorts and a tank top (above right).

PLAYBOY
INTERVIEW: RUSH LIMBAUGH GETS IN OUR FACE!
PLAYMATE ERIKA ELENIAK BECOMES A STAR
HOW MARLON BRANDO DESTROYED PARADISE

"I grew up fast," says Erika (above, with friend Phillip Goglia, in 1997), who had her first on-screen kiss (as Elliott's girlfriend in *E.T.*) at the age of 13 and jumped out of a cake as Steven Seagal's Playmate-turned-commando sidekick in *Under Siege* at the age of 23. We can't wait for what's next.

The Real DIRK DIGGLER

long before he inspired "boogie nights," john holmes—a.k.a. johnny wadd—
was america's most naturally gifted porn star.
then came drugs, murder and aids. it's a story more riveting than any movie

by Craig Vetter

HE COULDN'T act, wasn't particularly good-looking and wasn't too bright. He was a liar, a thief and a crack junkie who was accused of taking part in the grisly murders of four people who were savagely beaten to death. Just about the only thing John C. Holmes—a.k.a. Johnny Wadd—had going for him was his magnificent dick: 14 inches long, as thick as a wrist, closer to a Louisville Slugger than any other cock ever put on film. It was enough to earn him several million dollars for the more than 500 X-rated feature films he made. Enough to inspire, ten years after his death, *Boogie Nights*, a movie based loosely on his years as the one and only male porn actor to achieve the marquee status of the female stars. And though critics have generally loved the movie, those who knew Holmes, those who worked with him in the outlaw world of the early hard-core business, tell a much darker and more sinister story about the life of the man they still call the King of Porn. And, unlike the movie's, the ending to their story isn't a happy one.

The stories Holmes told about himself were mostly lies, tales that could have been lifted from the thin scripts through which his characters moved on film from one erotic scene to another. He grew up, he said, with a rich aunt who took him to Europe, fed him caviar and champagne and cozied him in her lavish Florida mansion. When he was just eight years old, she took his virginity, then schooled him in the art of fucking while the two of them were waited on by butlers and maids and cooks.

In fact, he was from a poor Midwestern family of confused lineage. His birth certificate registers him as John Curtis Estes, born in rural Ohio on August 8, 1944, though his listed father, Carl Estes, a railroad laborer, was never a part of his life. Sometime later, his mother, Mary, changed his last name to that of her husband, Edward Holmes, a carpenter. They divorced when John was three, and the family—John's mother, two brothers and a sister—moved to a housing project in Columbus. When John was eight, his mother married a man named Harold, who moved them to a small house in Pataskala, Ohio. Neighbors remember John as a shy, awkward boy with a perfect attendance record at Baptist Bible classes, a love for the outdoors and a tense relationship with his manic-depressive stepfather. By the time that John reached high school, his relationship with Harold had become violent. When he turned 16 his mother defused the situation by signing papers that enabled him to join the Army early. He went off with the Signal Corps to Germany for three years.

He had a very good time in the service, according to an autobiographical manuscript his widow, Laurie Holmes, is preparing for publication under the title *Porn King*. Laurie, who has worked in more than 20 porn films, is a delicately pretty 34-year-old who was with John for the last five years of his life and married him 14 months before he died. She's a brunette in their wedding pictures but a blonde these days, and though she no longer makes movies, she fondly remembers her days as Misty Dawn. "I was a natural-born porn animal," she said of her film career. "I didn't even have to take drugs to do it. I was naturally sick." She makes a living now dancing in strip clubs around the Southwest.

Laurie is guarded about the manuscript and will paraphrase and quote from it sparingly. She insists that the

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID LEVINE

stories in the book are true, despite the fact that many of them, including one of John's Army reminiscences, sound like the macho legend spinning he was notorious for.

"He had a lot of fun in Germany," she said, flipping through the 200 typed pages to find what John had written. "He spent a lot of time in a bordello, where the madam liked him so much that she wouldn't let him pay and wouldn't let any of the other girls near him. Here's a quote: 'The Army was good for me. I can't honestly say that it taught me any morals or sense of responsibility. I had been raised with those qualities. What it taught me was that there was a whole world of sex I had yet to discover.'"

When he mustered out he landed in New York and started hanging around with a buddy who showed him how he could make a lot of money as a prostitute. "But he didn't like the cold weather," Laurie said, continuing the story in her own words. "He'd grown up with it in Ohio. Anyway, what he really wanted to be was a cinematographer, to work behind the cameras. He said he never in his wildest dreams thought he was going to be what he became."

From New York he hitchhiked to Los Angeles, where he met and married a nurse named Sharon Gebenini. He took odd jobs, intending to save money to go to UCLA film school. He later claimed to have graduated, though there is no evidence he ever enrolled. Instead, while in his early 20s, in the porn capital of the world, he fell easily into the trades that his monumental penis fated him to: He whored, posed for still photographs and worked in a few short erotic films called loops. He was paid $100 for his first short movie, but the check bounced. "From then on," Laurie said, "it was cash only for John." Then, sometime in 1971, he met Bill Amerson, the 6'3", 250-pound Brahman bull of the fledgling hard-core movie business, who would become his mentor, his protector and perhaps the only close friend he ever had.

Now 60, Amerson has a big, rumbling voice and a presence that has been described as "benignly menacing." He's been clean and sober for six years and works as a counselor at the California Center for Addiction Recovery. That's about as far across town as he could get from his days in the X business, with its big money, Mob connections, hillside houses, women, drugs, arrests and shootings.

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"I got into the business in 1970," Amerson said. "My wife at the time—I've had a few—knew a couple of girls in the nudie business. They were making movies—all simulated stuff back then, no penetration—and I went to work for them to learn how to do it. Back then you could shoot an X-rated movie for $4000 and make 60 grand on it. Around 1971 some friends and I decided to start showing actual penetration. We took $14,000 and a handful of bennies, and in one weekend we made five films. We sold them in New York and Chicago, made back our investment in a week and went on to make a lot of money off those movies."

Enough money, it turned out, to attract a legendary organized crime family from New York, who sent an underboss to Hollywood to organize a piece of the action.

"I told him I didn't want any partners," said Amerson, who still wears a diamond pinkie ring, the fraternity jewelry of the profession. "Said I'd teach him the business but that I liked to work alone. He basically told me, 'If you don't work with us, you don't work.' I wanted to work."

That same year, working with his new partners out of a building called Crossroads of the World on Sunset Boulevard, he met John Holmes.

"It was late in the afternoon. We'd been interviewing people all day for magazine work, and in wanders this kid, six feet tall, really scrawny, ugly. I thought, Don't waste my time. The guy I was working with told me to take a Polaroid and get rid of him. So we went in the back room, he took off his clothes—and I just stood there looking at his dick, thinking, My God, this guy's a star."

Holmes' timing was propitious. He had walked into an enterprise that had begun to surge into the mainstream. The grungy freelancers in trench coats who sold "dirty" 8mm films out of the trunks of cars were being replaced by organized hustlers who knew how to make and distribute big-screen movies with real sex. And an audience was ready for them. In 1972 *Deep Throat*, *The Devil in Miss Jones* and *Behind the Green Door* broke hard-core movies into the public consciousness as a logical outgrowth of the sexual revolution.

Not that those in the business escaped the wrath of conservatives or the police, who were still vigorously enforcing pornography laws.

"There was a tremendous tyrannical power that came down on the performers," remembered Bill Margold, a 54-year-old critic, porn actor, director and entrepreneur who started his career in 1969. "Everything we did back then was illegal. I was in 300 movies—500 sex scenes—wondering through much of it if I was going to be arrested. And I was, many times. One of the things I hated about *Boogie Nights* was that it never portrayed any of the incredible tension we worked under. We were the last outlaws, really. It was *Les Misérables*. We were the Jean Valjeans, the vice cops were Javert and our loaves of bread were between our legs."

Margold, who coined the title "the King" for Holmes, vividly remembered his first encounter with the cock that was, he says, "absolute proof that all men are not created equal."

"The first movie I made with him was called *Disco Dolls in Hot Skin, 3D*. I was on the floor being blown by the great Lesllie Bovee, reputed to be the best cocksucker in the business. John was above us on a window seat, and there were three or four girls playing with him. At one point I glanced up to see his dick hanging over my head, and it looked like the opening scene from *Star Wars*, with that spaceship swooping in, filling the screen. It was intimidating. My poor dick just collapsed into the rug like an ostrich burying its head."

Holmes' first movies cast him in bit parts and didn't pay much, which left him hustling around the business for whatever work he could find. Then he showed up on the set of a movie Bob Chinn was directing.

Chinn, a soft-spoken, slightly built Hawaiian, had begun making amateur films when he was 12, after his family had moved from the islands to New Mexico. He bounced from the University of Miami to Santa Monica City College, then graduated from UCLA's film school in 1966. He went to work building sets for commercials, crewing on X-rated films and making erotic loops on his own and selling them to theaters.

"In those days you could hire a girl for $25 and shoot ten or 15 minutes of film, one reel. It was a strange period, when you could get away with hard-core if you did just a little, sort of slipped it in. There wasn't a lot of money in it then, but it was a living, and it led to my crewing on features and then to directing them."

Asked about Mafia involvement in those years, Chinn was comically circumspect, though he wasn't trying to be funny. "I don't know if they were Mob or not," he said. "I was making films for Italian businessmen."

He was working out of an office next to the Pussycat Theater on Western Avenue when Holmes walked in and asked him for a job on the crew or as an actor.

"I'd heard about him from an actress I worked with," said Chinn, on his way to the sort of understatement that is his hallmark. "And when I saw him with his clothes off, I thought, I could make an interesting movie with this man."

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robo watch

STOCK QUOTES, PAGES, E-MAIL . . . TIME'S NOT WASTIN'

Wristwatches have turned techno. In addition to managing the mundane task of keeping time, they're doubling as pagers, e-mail devices and even personal electronic organizers. Fortunately, the extra functions won't weigh you down, but you'll have to spend a few minutes with a manual to make sense of it all. Top to bottom: The Beepwear watch from MTX Paging Products (a joint venture of Motorola and Timex) combines a dual time-zone LCD watch with ten alarms and a nationwide alphanumeric pager (about $130). The Seiko Black Bezel MessageWatch receives news, weather and stock reports, sports scores, paged messages and e-mail notification, and updates itself to an atomic clock at least 36 times throughout the day (about $190, plus a $15-per-month service fee). The Timex Data Link 150 watch stores up to 150 appointments, notes and phone numbers, all of which can be easily beamed from your computer using the provided software (about $140).

SCULPTURE BY PARVIZ SADIGHIAN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD IZUI

WHERE & HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 150.

John Holmes *(continued from page 122)*

"Sex was taking over my life. Husbands wanted me to fuck their wives, sometimes while they watched."

Immediately after Holmes left the office, Chinn went to work on a script for him. "I came up with the idea of a private detective sort of character. I called him Johnny Wadd and wrote the script on the back of an envelope."

Not exactly the Gettysburg Address, perhaps, but for Holmes, the character Johnny Wadd—a caricature of Chandler's and Hammett's tough-guy detectives—was a double-entendre star vehicle: a hard-boiled dick with a hard-boiled dick.

Chinn shot the first film, called *Johnny Wadd*, in a day. It was an hour long and cost about $750 to make. Theaters around the country bought it, wore out the prints and began asking for sequels. Chinn and Holmes made nine *Wadd* films, a series that eventually turned the kid from Ohio into the hottest male star the business would ever see. People began to recognize him on the street. He grew a droopy mustache and started wearing three-piece suits. His acting fee went to $3000 a day. His work as a gigolo for Beverly Hills women brought him cars and jewelry.

"Sex was taking over my life," he says in his autobiography. "Husbands wanted me to fuck their wives, sometimes while they watched. Wives were calling me to come back when their husbands weren't around. Wherever I went there was always someone new to meet—always a waiting bed."

At the height of his success, Holmes worked with the hottest female porn stars, including Marilyn Chambers, Seka and Gloria Leonard. A few months ago Leonard attended a rare big-screen showing of a Holmes movie in which she had co-starred. About 60 people sat listening in the Sunset Theater as Bill Margold introduced her. Leonard, articulate, sophisticated and beautiful in her early 50s, told the audience that she and Holmes had traveled to France in 1978 to make *Johnny Does Paris*, one of three films they made on that trip. "The day we met," she said, "he had this diva attitude, so I said, 'I'm sorry, my dear, but this set isn't large enough for two prima donnas.' He was a baby, really, and an egomaniac. But people are here tonight not because I'm in the film. They're here to see John Holmes."

Bill Margold thanked her, then noted that the big-screen experience was going to be very different than video-sized porn. "It's going to be all Eiffel Towers and Grand Canyons up here, folks."

And it was. Holmes made his way around Paris as a young Hemingwayesque writer determined to collect experiences he would someday write about. Leonard played a rich American woman who subsidized his adventures in exchange for the services of his mighty schlong. After 20 minutes of Holmes' terrible acting and four fuck scenes, Leonard made a discreet exit.

Around 1975, as Holmes' stardom grew, he began supplementing the marijuana he had always used with cocaine. The joke among his fellow actors was that if you wanted him in front of the camera, you had to lay a line of coke from his dressing room door to the set. According to his autobiography, his habit "spun wildly out of control" over a three-year period. Then he began freebasing and losing work because of his erratic behavior.

He'd always been a thief—stealing luggage from whatever airport he landed at, snagging jewelry out of the rented houses where his films were shot. But by 1979 his drug habit was outrunning his dwindling income and he began to burgle and steal from everyone he knew. Even his wife Sharon, with whom he had only an off-and-on relationship by then, and Gloria Leonard were targets. Holmes visited Leonard at her home. The following day, returning home from an appointment to meet John, Leonard found that $25,000 in valuables were missing.

Amerson and Holmes, meanwhile, had become close. "He's the godfather to my kids," said Amerson, citing the good times that drew them into their long friendship. "He lived with us in the big house we had in Sherman Oaks, and the two of us became like brothers. He liked to garden, did handyman stuff. We went hunting and fishing together, partied around town. He had a heart as big as the fucking world, but as he got more and more fucked up on drugs it became impossible to make movies with him. He started hanging out with his suppliers, real assholes, people like Eddie Nash and Ron Launius' bunch."

Nash, whose real name was Adel Nasrallah, had arrived in Los Angeles from Lebanon as a young man and opened a hot dog stand on Hollywood Boulevard. When he met Holmes, Nash was in his 50s and had parlayed his business into a drug-and-entertainment empire that included a restaurant on Hollywood Boulevard called the Seven Seas, a strip joint called the Kit Kat, several gay clubs, a club that catered to blacks and a rock-and-roll hangout called the Starwood.

Nash, a heavy addict himself, had a large home in the San Fernando Valley from which he dealt coke, heroin and other drugs. He was gaunt and had dark wavy hair and an evil temper. He rarely left his house. Instead, he invited friends and associates to parties that went on for days and often included his favorite entertainment—young women.

"He was an awful man," said Laurie Holmes. "John told me he used to leave the bathrooms without toilet paper, then offer the young women cocaine if they'd lick his ass clean."

His bodyguard, Greg Diles, slept in a back bedroom with a shotgun under his blanket.

Holmes was a star attraction at Nash's parties and eventually went to work delivering drugs and doing other favors for him in an attempt to repay some of the massive drug debt he owed the gangster.

And Nash was only one of the dangerous drug dealers Holmes owed. The others lived in a dumpy two-storied house on Wonderland Avenue in Laurel Canyon. The name on the lease was that of Joy Miller, a 46-year-old junkie who had been arrested for dealing. She lived there with her lover, Billy DeVerell, 42, a heroin addict with 13 arrests on his record, and they shared the house with Ron Launius, a 37-year-old convicted drug smuggler with a violent reputation. Holmes began visiting the house to fence what he had stolen in exchange for drugs, then went to work making connections and delivering for them. Sometime in the summer of 1981, he smoked up one of the shipments he was supposed to deliver. When he came back without the money, Launius beat him with a walking stick, then asked how he was going to make good.

Holmes—strung out, broke, unable to work and desperately afraid they were going to kill him—told them he knew someone they could rip off for lots of money and drugs, and that he could help them do it.

"Eddie Nash," he told them. "I've known him for three years. He trusts me, calls me his brother. I know the house, where the drugs are, and the cash. I'll draw you a floor plan. I'll visit him and leave a door unlocked. You

(continued on page 163)

"I never dreamed bodysurfing could be so much fun!"

THE GREAT SWIMSUIT TAKEOFF

show our models a little sympathy—swimsuits can be so confining

It's that time of year when we all start thinking about the beach. It's also the time of year when some magazine publishers forgo their usual editorial mix and devote entire issues to the celebration of the swimsuit. They do this for a good reason: They like swimsuits. And they like to fly high-profile models to exotic locations. We understand completely. We have been known to peek at those issues—they certainly are welcome changes from the coy wordplay and occasional sermonizing. But we had a notion to improve on the idea. We thought we'd take a less-inhibited approach and include women wearing only a portion of a swimsuit, or a whisper of a swimsuit, or women who were only considering wearing a swimsuit. And thanks to these wonderful models, we think we did it particularly well. Enjoy the beach.

Above, we see Angelique, who captures the spirit of swimsuit wearing. She is relaxed, confident and surrounded by water. Her suit is sufficiently porous to let the natural elements flow through without any bother. And her garment doesn't appear to be binding in any way. These are qualities we like to see.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WAYDA

Women on the beach tend to trovel in pocks. They cluster to offer one onother grooming tips and compliments on their choices of swimwear. Here we see (left to right) Deanna, Nicole, Carrie ond Stocy deconstructing their outfits, which has the some degree of difficulty as untying a shoeloce.

Women sometimes worry that by not wearing swimsuits they may expose themselves to harmful ultraviolet rays. But as Angelique, above, shows us, a suit doesn't necessarily offer much protection. For skin that is unaccustomed to the light of day, a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or more is a good idea. Jennifer, at right, clearly has no intention of getting burned. Not now. Not ever.

Above (left to right), Courtney, Mirella and Deborah debate the efficacy of the one-piece bathing suit. The only question remaining is, which piece? Below, Lonnie (left) and Angelique apparently had a difficult time deciding which suits to put on, so they did the only logical thing. Opposite, Leoni looks forward to a full and rewording bothing-suit seoson.

Life on the beach can be fast paced. This is true whether you're wearing a swimsuit or not. At left, Caurtney, Mirella and Jennifer (left to right) may be savoring same leisure time, but they spend it challenging waves. First they test the structural properties of sand. Then they experiment with its gritty decorative qualities. They conclude that friendship has little to do with the wearing of swimsuits.

When all is said and done, we believe we have made a strong argument for the swimwear-optional lifestyle. Here, Shawn makes the additional point that lacy netting, which serves no practical purpose in terms of clothing, is not without its allure. Like all the women we've seen, she is quite a catch.

Keller's Last Refuge *(continued from page 116)*

When you pictured a traitor, Keller thought, you pictured a furtive little man in a soiled raincoat.

"And you want me to——"

"To do what you do best, Keller."

Keller ate some salami, ate some eggs, drank some coffee.

"I don't think so," he said.

"I beg your pardon?"

"I'm not interested," Keller said. "If I ever did what you're implying, well, I don't do it anymore."

"You retired."

"That's right. And even if I hadn't, I wouldn't go behind the old man's back, not to work for someone who sent me off on a fool's errand with a flower in my lapel."

"You wore the flower," Bascomb said, "with the air of a man who never leaves home without one. I must tell you, Keller, you were born to wear a red carnation."

"That's good to know," Keller said, "but it doesn't change anything."

"Well, the same thing goes for your reluctance."

"How's that?"

"It's good to know how you feel," Bascomb said. "Good to get it all out in the open. But it doesn't change anything. We need you, and you're in."

He smiled, waiting for Keller to voice an objection. Keller let him wait.

"Think it through," Bascomb suggested. "Think U.S. Attorney's office. Think Internal Revenue Service. Think of all the resources of a powerful—some say too powerful—federal government, lined up against one essentially defenseless citizen."

Keller, despite himself, thought it through.

"And now forget all that," said Bascomb, waving it away like smoke. "And think of the opportunity you have to serve your nation. I don't know if you've ever thought of yourself as a patriot, Keller, but if you look deep within, I suspect you'll find wellsprings of patriotism you never knew existed. You're an American, Keller, and here you are with a chance to do something for America and save your own ass in the process."

Keller's words surprised him. "My father was a soldier," he said.

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Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land. . . .

Keller closed the book and set it aside. Sir Walter Scott's lines were quoted in a short story Keller had read in high school. The titular man without a country was Philip Nolan, doomed to wander the world all his life because he'd passed up his own chance to be a patriot.

Keller didn't have the story on hand, but he'd found the poetry in *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, and now he looked up "patriotism" in the index. The best thing he found was Dr. Samuel Johnson's word on the subject. "Patriotism," Johnson declared, "is the last refuge of a scoundrel."

The sentence had a nice ring to it, but he wasn't sure he knew what Johnson was getting at. Wasn't a patriot one of the good guys? Nathan Hale, say, regretting that he had but one life to give for his country. John Paul Jones, announcing that he had not yet begun to fight. David Farragut, damning the torpedoes, urging full speed ahead.

A true scoundrel couldn't be a genuine patriot, could he?

If you looked at it objectively, he had to admit, he was probably a scoundrel himself. He didn't much feel like a scoundrel. He felt like your basic New York single guy, living alone, eating out or bringing home takeout, schlepping his wash to the laundromat, doing the *Times* crossword with his morning coffee. Working out at the gym, starting doomed relationships with women, going to the movies by himself. There were 8 million stories in the naked city, most of them not very interesting, and his was one of them.

Except that every once in a while he got a phone call from a man in White Plains. And packed a bag and caught a plane and killed somebody.

Hard to argue the point. Man behaves like that, he's a scoundrel. Case closed.

Now he had a chance to be a patriot.

Not to seem like one, because no one would know about this, not even Dot and the old man. Bascomb had made himself very clear on the point. "Not a word to anyone, and if anything goes wrong, it's the same system as *Mission: Impossible*. We've never heard of you. You're on your own, and if you try to tell anybody you're working for the government, they'll just laugh in your face. If you give them my name, they'll say they've never heard of me. Because they never have."

"Because it's not your name."

"And you might have trouble finding the National Security Resource in the phone book. Or anywhere else, like the *Congressional Record*, say. We keep a pretty low profile. You ever heard of us before? Well, neither has anybody else."

There'd be no glory in it for Keller, and plenty of risk. That was how it worked when he did the old man's bidding, but for those efforts he was well compensated. All he'd get working for the NSR was an allowance for expenses, and not a very generous one at that.

So he wasn't doing it for the glory, nor for the cash. Bascomb had implied he had no choice, but you always had a choice, and he'd chosen to go along. For what?

For my country, he thought.

"It's peacetime," Bascomb had said, "and the old Soviet threat dried up and blew away, but don't let that fool you, Keller. Your country has enemies within and without her borders. And sometimes we have to do it to them before they can do it to us."

Keller, knotting his necktie, buttoning his suit jacket, didn't figure he looked much like a soldier. But he felt like one. A soldier in his own idiosyncratic uniform, off to serve his country.

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Howard Ramsgate was a big man, broad shouldered, with a ready smile on his guileless, square-jawed face. He was wearing a white shirt, a striped tie and the trousers of a gray glen plaid suit. The jacket hung on a clothes tree in the corner of the office.

He looked up as Keller entered. "Afternoon," he said. "Gorgeous day, isn't it? I'm Howard Ramsgate."

Keller supplied a name, not his own. Not that Ramsgate would be around to repeat it, but suppose he had a tape recorder running? He wouldn't be the first man in Washington to bug his own office.

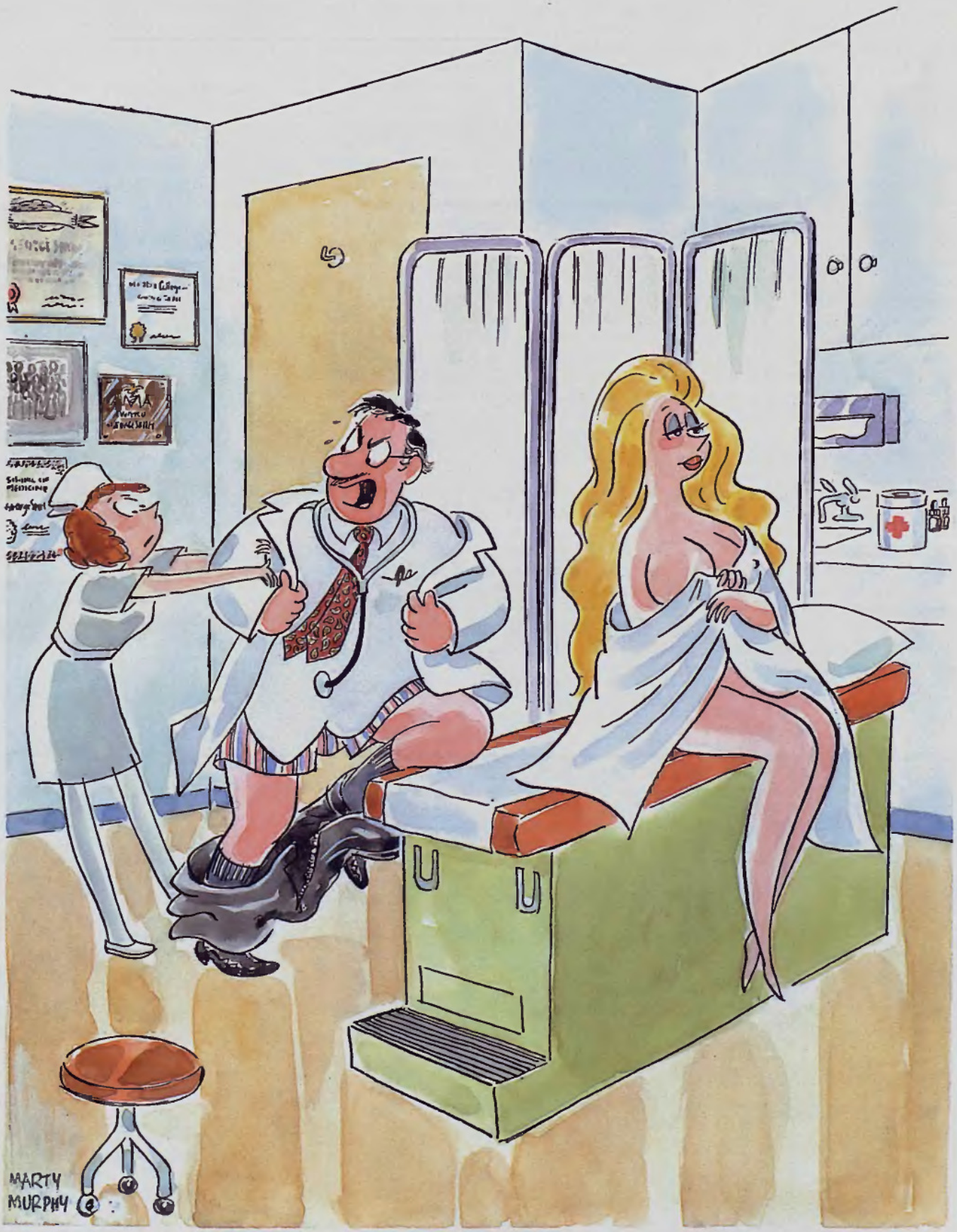
"Good to meet you," Ramsgate said, and stood up to shake hands. He was wearing suspenders, and Keller noticed they had cats on them, different breeds of cats.

When you pictured a traitor, Keller thought, you pictured a furtive little man in a soiled raincoat, skulking around a basement or lurking in a shabby café. The last thing you expected was a pair of suspenders with cats on them.

"Well, now," Ramsgate was saying. "Did we have an appointment? I don't see it on my calendar."

"I just took a chance and dropped by."

"Fair enough. How'd you manage to



"Hey! Screw my Hippocratic oath, OK?"

get past Janeane?"

The secretary. Keller had timed her break, slipping in when she ducked out for a quick cigarette.

"I don't know," he said. "I didn't notice anybody out there."

"Well, you're here," Ramsgate said. "That's what counts, right?"

"Right."

"So," he said. "Let's see your mousetrap."

Keller stared at him.

"That's more or less a generic term for me," Ramsgate said. "That old saw—create a better mousetrap and the world will beat a path to your door. Emerson, wasn't it?"

Keller had no idea. "Emerson," he agreed.

"With that sort of line," Ramsgate said, "it was almost always Emerson, except when it was Benjamin Franklin. Solid American common sense, that's what you could count on from both of them."

"Right."

"As it happens," Ramsgate said, "Americans have registered more patents for mousetraps than for any other device. You wouldn't believe the variety of schemes men have come up with for snaring and slaughtering the little rodents. Of course," he said, plucking his suspenders, "the best mousetrap of all's not patentable. It's got four legs and it says meow."

Keller managed a chuckle.

"I've seen my share of mousetraps," Ramsgate went on. "Like every other patent attorney. And every day I see something new. A lot of the inventions brought into this office aren't any more patentable than a cat. Some have already been invented by somebody else. Not all of them do what they're supposed to do, and not all of the things they're supposed to do are worth doing. But some of them work, and some are useful, and every now and then one comes along and adds to the quality of life in this wonderful country of ours."

Solid American common sense, Keller thought. This great country of ours. The man was a traitor and he had the gall to sound like a politician on the stump.

"So I get stirred up every time somebody walks in here," Ramsgate said. "What have you brought for me?"

"Well, let me just show you," Keller said, and came around the desk. He opened his briefcase and placed a yellow legal pad on the desktop.

"'Please forgive me,'" Ramsgate read aloud. "Forgive you for what?"

Keller answered him with a choke hold, maintaining it long enough to guarantee unconsciousness. Then he let go and tore the top sheet from the legal pad, crumpled it into a ball, dropped the paper into the wastebasket. The sheet beneath it, the new top sheet, already held a similar message: "I'm sorry. Please forgive me."

It wouldn't stand up to a detailed forensic investigation, but Keller figured it would make it easy for them to call it suicide if they wanted to.

He went to the window, opened it. He rolled Ramsgate's desk chair over to the window, took hold of the man under the arms, hauled him to his feet, then heaved him out the window.

He put the chair back, tore the second sheet off the pad, crumpled it, tossed it at the basket. That was better, he decided—no note, just a pad on the desk, and then, when they look in the basket, they can come up with two drafts of a note Ramsgate decided not to leave after all.

Nice touch. They'd pay more attention to a note if they had to hunt for it.

Janeane was back sitting at her desk when he left, chatting on the phone. She didn't even look up.

•

Keller, back in New York, started each of the next five days with a copy of *The Washington Post* from a newsstand across the street from the UN building. There was nothing in it the first morning, but the next day he found a story on the obituary page about an established Washington patent attorney, an apparent suicide. Keller learned where Howard Ramsgate had gone to college and law school and read about a couple of inventions he had helped steer through the patent process. The names of his survivors were given as well—a wife, two children, a brother in Lake Forest, Illinois.

What it didn't say was that he was a spy, a traitor. Didn't say he'd had help getting out the window. Keller, perched on a stool in a coffee shop, wondered how much more they knew than they were letting on.

The next three days he didn't find another word about Ramsgate. This wasn't suspicious in and of itself—how often was there a follow-up to the suicide of a not-too-prominent attorney?—but Keller was trying to read between the lines of other stories, trying to find some subtle connection to Ramsgate's death. This lobbyist charged with illegal campaign contributions, that Japanese tourist caught in the cross fire of a drug-related shootout, a key vote on a close bill in Congress—any such item might somehow link up to the defenestration of Howard Ramsgate. And he, the man who had made it happen, would never know.

On the fifth morning, as Keller found himself frowning over a minor scandal in the mayor's office, it occurred to him to wonder if he was being watched. Had anyone observed him in the days since Ramsgate's death? Had it been noted that he was starting each day not around the corner from his apartment with *The New York Times* but five blocks away with

"I'm coming out from behind this mask on 'Oprah.'"

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The Washington Post?

He thought it over and decided he was being silly. But, then, was he being any less silly buying the *Post* each morning? He'd tossed a pebble into a pond days ago, and now he kept returning, trying to detect a subtle ripple on the smooth surface.

He got out of there and left the paper behind. Later, he realized what had him acting this way.

He was looking for closure, for some sense of completion. Whenever he did a job for the old man, he made a phone call, got a pat on the back, bantered a bit with Dot and, in the ordinary course of things, collected his money. That last was the most important, of course, but the acknowledgment was important, too, along with the mutual recognition that the job was done and done satisfactorily.

With Ramsgate he got none of that. There was no report to make, nobody to banter with, no one to tell him how well he'd done. Tight-lipped men in Washington offices might be talking about him, but he didn't get to hear what they were saying. Bascomb might be pleased, but he wasn't getting in touch, wasn't dispensing any pats on the back.

Well, Keller decided, that was OK.

He could live with that. He could even take a special satisfaction in it. He didn't need drums or bugles, parades or medals. He had been leading the life of a scoundrel, and his country had called on him. And he had served her. The service he had performed was its own reward.

He was a soldier.

•

Time passed, and Keller got used to the idea that he would never hear from Bascomb again. Then one afternoon he was standing in line at the half-price-tickets booth in Times Square when someone tapped him on the shoulder. "Excuse me," a fellow said, handing him an envelope. "Think you dropped this."

Keller started to say he hadn't, then stopped when he recognized the man. Bascomb! Before Keller could say anything the man was gone, disappearing into the crowd.

Just a plain white envelope, the flap glued down and taped shut. Nothing written on it. From the heft of it, you'd put two stamps on it before mailing it. But there were no stamps, and Bascomb had not entrusted it to the mails.

Keller put it in his pocket. When he got to the front of the line he bought a ticket to that night's performance of a Fifties musical. He thought of buying two tickets and hiding one in a hollowed-out pumpkin. Then, when the curtain went up at eight o'clock, Bascomb would be in the seat beside him.

He went home and opened the envelope. There was a name, along with an address in Pompano Beach, Florida. There were two Polaroid shots, one of a man and woman, the other of the same man alone, sitting down. There were nine hundred-dollar bills, used and out of sequence, and two fifties.

Keller looked at the photos. They'd evidently been taken several years apart. The fellow looked older in the photo that showed him unaccompanied, and was that a wheelchair he was sitting in?

The poor bastard, Keller started to think, and then caught himself. The guy had no pity coming. The son of a bitch was a traitor.

•

The thousand in cash fell short of covering Keller's expenses. He had to pay full coach fare on the flight to West Palm Beach, had to rent a car and had to stay three nights in a hotel before he could get the job done, and another night afterward before he could catch a morning flight home. The $500 he'd received as expenses for the Howard Ramsgate incident had paid his way on the Metroliner and covered his room and a good dinner, with a couple of dollars left over. But he had to dip into his own pocket to get the job done in Pompano Beach.

Not that it really mattered. What did he care about a few dollars one way or the other?

He might have cut corners by getting in and out faster, but the operation turned out to be a tricky one. The traitor—his name was Drucker, Louis Drucker, but it was simpler for Keller to think of him as the traitor—lived in a beachfront condo on Briny Avenue, right in the middle of Pompano Beach. The residents, predictably, had a median age well into the golden years, and the traitor was by no means the only one there with wheels on his chair. Others got around with aluminum walkers, while the more athletic codgers strutted around with canes.

This was the first time Keller's work had taken him to such a venue, so he didn't know if security was as much a priority at every senior citizens' residence. But this one was harder to sneak into than the Pentagon. There was an attendant posted in the lobby at all hours, and there was closed-circuit surveillance of the elevators and stairwells.

The traitor left the building twice a day, morning and evening, for a turn along the beach. He was always accompanied by a woman half his age who pushed his chair on the hard-packed sand, then read a Spanish-language magazine and smoked a cigarette or two while he took the sun.

Keller considered and rejected elabo-

"Why do I always fall for the guys who treat me like dirt?"

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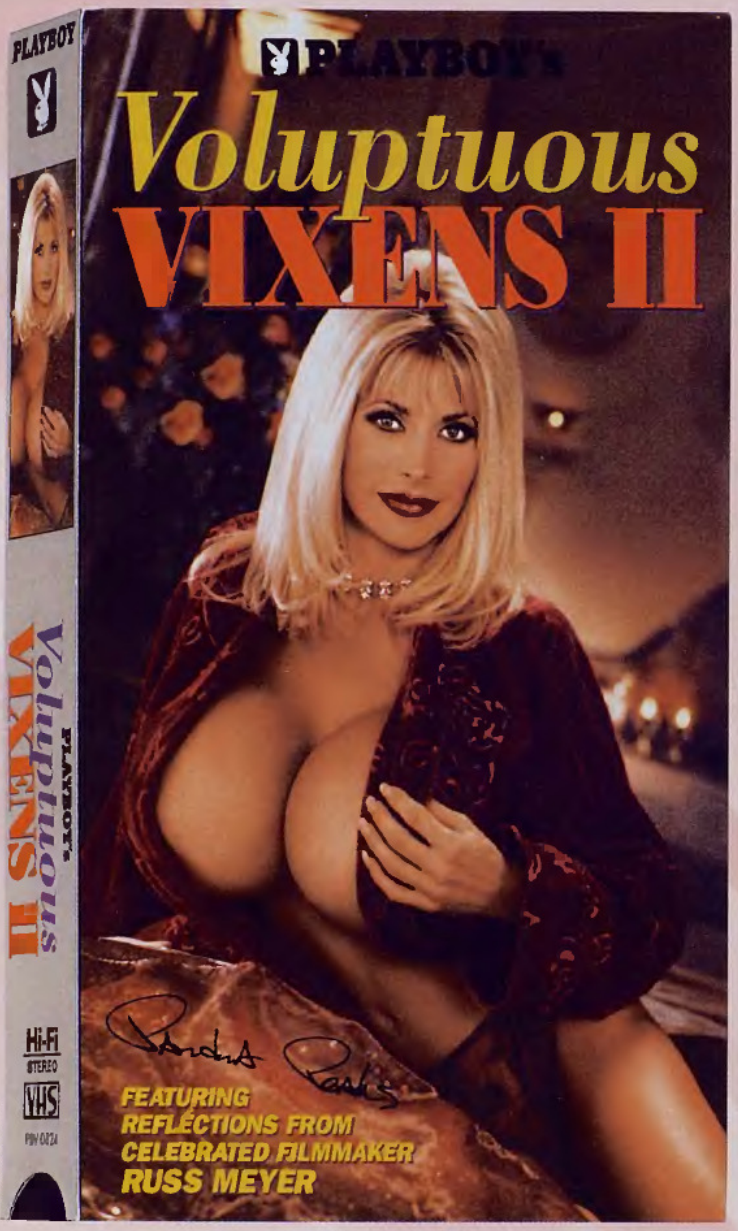

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rate schemes for getting into the building. He could get in, but then what? The woman lived in the traitor's apartment, so he'd have to take her out, too. He had no compunction about this, recognizing that civilian casualties were inevitable in modern warfare, and who was to say she was an entirely unwitting pawn? No, if the only way to nullify the traitor led through her, Keller would take her out without a second thought.

But a double homicide made for a high-profile incident, and why draw unnecessary attention? With an aged and infirm quarry, it was so much simpler to make it look like natural causes.

Could he lure the woman off the premises? Could he gain access during her absence? And could he get out unobtrusively, his work completed, before she got back?

He was working it out, fumbling with a plan, when fate dropped it all in his lap. It was midmorning, with the sun climbing the eastern sky, and he'd dutifully dogged their footsteps (well, her footsteps, since the traitor's feet never touched the ground) a mile or so up the beach. Now the traitor sat in his chair facing the ocean, his head back, his eyes closed, his leathery skin soaking up the rays. A few yards away the woman lay on her side on a beach towel, smoking a cigarette, reading a magazine.

She put out the cigarette, burying it in the sand. And, moments later, the magazine slipped from her fingers as she dozed off.

Keller gave her a minute. He looked left, then right. There was nobody close by, and he was willing to take his chances with those who were 50 yards or more from the scene. Even if they were looking at him, they'd never realize what was happening right before their eyes. Especially given the ages of most of those eyes.

Keller came up behind the traitor, clapped a hand over his treacherous mouth, used the thumb and forefinger of his other hand to pinch the man's nostrils closed and kept his air shut off while he counted, slowly, to a number that seemed high enough.

When he let go, the traitor's hand fell to one side. Keller propped it up and left him looking as though he were just sleeping, baking like a lizard in the warm embrace of the sun.

•

"Where have you been, Keller? I've been calling you for days."

"I was out of town," he said.

"Out of town?"

"Florida, actually."

"Florida? Disney World, by any chance? Do I get to shake the hand that shook the hand of Mickey Mouse?"

"I just wanted a little sun and sand," he said. "I went to the Gulf Coast. Sanibel Island."

"Did you bring me a seashell, Keller?"

"A seashell?"

"The shelling is supposed to be spectacular there," Dot said. "The island sticks out into the Gulf instead of stretching out parallel to the land, the way they're supposed to."

"'The way they're supposed to'?"

"Well, the way they usually do. The tides bring in shells by the carload, and people come from all over the world to walk the beach and pick them up. But why am I telling you all this? You're the one who just got back from the damn place. You didn't bring me a shell, did you?"

"You have to get up early in the morning for the serious shelling," Keller said, wondering if it was true. "The shellers are out there at the crack of dawn, like locusts on a field of barley."

"Barley, huh?"

"Anyway," he said, "what do I care about shells? I just wanted a break."

"You missed some work."

"Oh," he said.

"It couldn't wait, and who knew where you were or when you'd be back? You should really call in when you leave town."

"I didn't think of it."

"Well, why would you? You never leave town. When's the last time you had a vacation?"

"I'm on vacation most of my life," he said. "Right here in New York."

"Then I guess it was about time you went away for something besides work. I suppose you had company."

"Well——"

"Good for you, Keller. It's just as well I couldn't reach you. But next time——"

"The next time I'll certainly keep you posted," he said. "Better than that, I'll bring home a seashell."

•

This time he didn't try to track the story in the papers. Even if Pompano Beach had a newspaper of its own, you couldn't expect to find it at the UN newsstand. They'd have *The Miami Herald* there, but he didn't figure the *Herald* ran a story every time an old fellow drifted off in the sunshine. If it did, there would be no room left in the paper for hurricanes and car-jackings.

Besides, why did he want to read about it? The traitor was dead. That was all he had to know.

•

It was almost two months before Bascomb got in touch again. This time there was no face-to-face contact, however fleeting.

Instead, Keller got a phone call. The voice was presumably Bascomb's, but he couldn't have sworn to it. The call was brief, and the voice never rose much above a low murmur.

"Of course I'm a lousy lover. I don't get enough practice!"

"Stay home tomorrow," the voice said. "Something'll be delivered to you."

The FedEx guy came around the next morning, bringing a flat cardboard envelope that held a photograph, an index card with a name and address printed on it and a sheaf of used hundreds.

There were ten of the bills, a thousand dollars again, though the address this time was in Aurora, Colorado, which involved quite a few more air miles than Pompano Beach. That rankled Keller at first, but when he thought about it he decided there was something to be said for the low payment. If you lost money every time you did this sort of thing, it underscored your commitment to your role as a patriot. You never had to question your motives, because it was clear you weren't in it for the money.

He squared up the bills and put them in his wallet, then took a good long look at the photo of the latest traitor.

And the phone rang.

Dot said, "Keller, I'm lonesome and there's nothing on TV but Sally Jessy Raphaël. Come on out here and keep me company."

•

Keller took a train to White Plains and another one back to New York. He packed a bag, called an airline and took a cab to JFK. That night his plane landed in Seattle, where he was met by a lean young man in a double-breasted brown suit. The fellow wore a hat, too, a fedora that gave him a sort of retro look.

The young man—Joel, his name was—dropped Keller at a hotel. In the morning they met in the lobby, and Joel drove him around and pointed out various points of interest, including the Kingdome and the Space Needle and the home and office of the man Keller was supposed to kill. And, barely visible in the distance, the snow-capped peak of Mount Rainier.

They ate lunch at a good downtown restaurant, and Joel put away an astonishing amount of food. Keller wondered where he put it. There wasn't a spare ounce on him.

The waitress was refilling the coffee when Joel said, "Well, I was starting to wonder if we missed him today. Just coming through the door? Gray suit, blue tie? Big red face on him? That's Cully Wilcox."

He looked just like his photo. It never hurt, though, to have somebody ID the guy in the flesh.

"He's a big man in this town," Joel said, his lips barely moving. "Harder they fall, right?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"Isn't that the expression? 'The bigger they are, the harder they fall'?"

"Oh, right," Keller said.

"I guess you don't feel like talking right now," Joel said. "I guess you got things to think about and details to work out."

"I guess so," Keller said.

•

"This may take a while," he told Dot. "The subject is locally prominent."

"Locally prominent, is he?"

"So they tell me. That means more security on the way in and more heat on the way out."

"Always the way when it's somebody big."

"On the other hand, the bigger they are, the harder they fall."

"Whatever that means," she said. "Well, take your time, Keller. Smell the flowers. Just don't let the grass grow under your feet."

•

Hell of a thing, Keller thought.

He muted the TV, just in time to stop a cute young couple from advising him that Certs was two, two, two mints in one. He closed his eyes and adapted the dialogue to his own circumstances. *"Keller is a contract killer." "No, Keller is a traitor killer." "He's two, two, two killers in one. . . ."*

It was tough enough, he thought, to lead one life at a time. It was a lot trickier when they overlapped. He couldn't stall the old man, couldn't put off the trip to Seattle while he did Uncle Sam's business in Colorado. But how long could he delay the mission? How urgent was it? He couldn't call Bascomb to ask him. So he had to assume a high degree of urgency.

Which meant he had to find a way to do two, two, two jobs in one.

Just what he needed.

•

It was a Saturday morning, a week and a half after he'd flown to Seattle, when Keller flew home. He had to change planes in Chicago, and it was late by the time he got to his apartment. He'd called White Plains the night before to tell them the job was done. He unpacked his bag, shucked his clothes, took a hot shower and fell into bed.

The following afternoon the telephone rang.

"No names, no pack drill," said Bascomb. "I just wanted to say, 'Well done.'"

"Oh," Keller said.

"Not our usual thing," Bascomb went on, "but even a seasoned professional can use an occasional pat on the back. You've done fine work, and you ought to know it's appreciated."

"That's nice to hear," Keller admitted.

"And I'm not speaking just for myself. Your efforts are appreciated on a much higher level."

"Really?"

"On the highest level, actually."

"The highest level?"

"No names, no pack drill," Bascomb said, "but let's just say you've earned the

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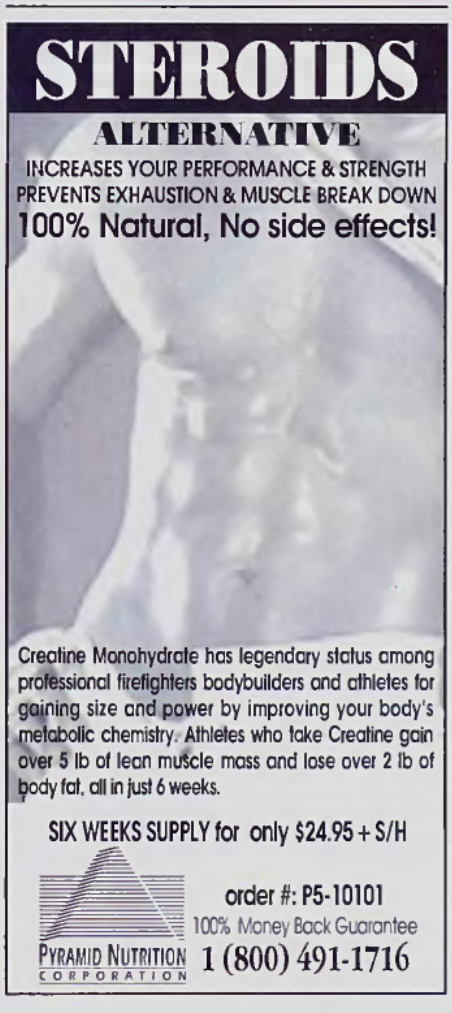
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profound gratitude of a man who never inhaled."

•

The next day Keller caught an early train to White Plains and spent 40 minutes upstairs with the old man. When he came downstairs Dot told him there was fresh coffee made or iced tea.

He went for the coffee. She already had a tall glass of iced tea poured for herself. They sat at the kitchen table and she asked how it had gone in Seattle. He said it went OK.

"And how did you like Seattle, Keller? From what I hear it's everybody's city du jour. Used to be San Francisco, and now it's Seattle."

"It was fine," he said.

"I understand it's a great place for a cup of coffee."

"They're serious about their coffee," he allowed. "Maybe too serious. Wine snobs are bad enough, but when all it is is coffee. . . ."

"But the weather's really lousy there," she said. "Rains all the time, the way I hear it."

"There's a lot of rain," he said. "But it's gentle. It doesn't bowl you over."

"It rains but it never pours?"

"Something like that."

"I guess the rain got to you, huh?"

"How's that?"

"Rain, day after day. And all that coffee snobbery. You couldn't stand it."

Huh? "It didn't bother me," he said.

"No?"

"Not really. Why?"

"Well, I was wondering," she said, looking at him over the rim of her glass. "I was wondering what the hell you were doing in Denver."

The TV was on with the sound off, tuned to one of the home-shopping channels. A woman with unconvincing red hair was modeling a dress. Keller thought it looked dowdy, but the number in the lower right corner of the screen kept advancing, indicating that viewers were calling in a steady stream to order the item.

"Of course, I could probably guess what you were doing in Denver," Dot was saying, "and I could probably come up with the name of the person you were doing it to. I got somebody to send me a couple of issues of *The Denver Post*, and what did I find but a story about a woman in someplace called Aurora who came to a bad end. I swear the whole thing had your fingerprints all over it. Don't look so alarmed, Keller. Not your actual fingerprints. I was speaking figuratively."

"Figuratively," he said.

"It did look like your work," she said, "and the timing was right. It might have lacked a little of your usual subtlety, but I figure that's because you were in a big hurry to get back to Seattle."

Keller pointed at the television set. He said, "Can you believe how many of those dresses they've sold?"

"Tons."

"Would you buy a dress like that?"

"Not in a million years. I'd look like a sack of potatoes in something cut like that."

"I mean any dress. Over the phone, without trying it on."

"I buy from catalogs all the time, Keller. It amounts to the same thing. If it doesn't look right, you can always send it back."

"Do you ever do that? Send stuff back?"

"Sure."

"He doesn't know, does he, Dot? About Denver?"

"No."

He nodded, hesitated, then leaned forward. "Dot," he said, "can you keep a secret?"

She listened while he told her the whole thing, from Bascomb's first appearance in the coffee shop to the most recent phone call, relaying the good wishes of the man who never inhaled. When he was done he got up and poured himself more coffee. He came back and sat down and Dot said, "You know what gets me? 'Dot, can you keep a secret?' Can *I* keep a secret?"

"Well, I——"

"If I can't," she said, "then we're all in big trouble. Keller, I've been keeping your secrets just about as long as you've had secrets to keep. And you're asking me——"

"I wasn't exactly asking you. What do they call it when you don't really expect an answer?"

"Prayer," she said.

"Rhetorical," he said. "It was a rhetorical question. For God's sake, I know you can keep a secret."

"That's why you kept this one from me," she said, "for lo these many months."

"Well, I figured this was different."

"Because it was a state secret."

"That's right."

"Hush-hush, your eyes only, need-to-know. Matters of national security."

"Uh-huh."

"And what if I turned out to be a commie rat?"

"Dot——"

"So how come all of a sudden I got a top-secret clearance? Or is it need to know? In other words, if I hadn't brought up Denver. . . ."

"No," he said. "I was planning to tell you anyway."

"Sooner or later, you mean."

"Sooner. When I called yesterday and said I wanted to wait until today to come up, I was buying a little time to think it over."

"And?"

"And I decided I wanted to run the

"If this is more damn sheep, Argyle, I don't want to hear about it!"

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whole thing by you, to see what you think."

"What I think."

"Right."

"Well, you know what that tells me, Keller? It tells me what *you* think."

"And?"

"And I think it's about the same thing I think."

"Spell it out, OK?"

"C-O-N," she said, "J-O-B. Total B-U-L-L-S-H—— Am I getting through?"

"Loud and clear."

"He must be pretty slick," she said, "to have a guy like you jumping through hoops. But I can see how it would work. In the first place, you want to believe it. 'Young man, your country has need of you.' The next thing you know, you're knocking off strangers for chump change."

"Expense money. But it never covered the expenses, except the first time."

"The patent lawyer, caught in his own mousetrap. What do you figure he did to piss off Bascomb?"

"No idea."

"And the old fart in the wheelchair. It's a good thing you iced the son of a bitch, Keller, or our children and our children's children would grow up speaking Russian."

"Don't rub it in."

"I'm just making you pay for that rhetorical question. All said and done, do you think there's a chance in a million Bascomb's on the level?"

Keller made himself think it over, but the answer wasn't going to change. "No," he said.

"What was the tip-off? The approval from on high?"

"I guess so. You know, I got a hell of a rush."

"I can imagine."

"I mean, the man at the top. The big guy."

"Chomping doughnuts and thinking of you."

"But then you think about it afterward, and there's just no way. Even if he had said something along those lines, would Bascomb have passed it on? And then, when I started to look at the whole picture. . . ."

"Tilt."

"Uh-huh."

"Well," she said, "what kind of a line do we have on Bascomb? We don't know his name or address or how to get hold of him. What does that leave us?"

"Damn little."

"Oh, I don't know. We don't need a hell of a lot, Keller. And we do know something."

"What?"

"We know three people he wanted killed," she said. "That's a start."

•

Keller, dressed in a suit and tie and sporting a red carnation in his buttonhole, sat in what he supposed you would call the den of a sprawling ranch house in Glen Burnie, Maryland. He had the TV on with the sound off, and he was beginning to think that was the best way to watch it. The silence lent a welcome air of mystery to everything, even the commercials.

He perked up at the sound of a car in the driveway, and as soon as he heard a key in the lock, he triggered the remote to shut off the TV altogether. Then he sat and waited patiently while Paul Ernest Farrar hung his topcoat in the hall closet, carried a sack of groceries to the kitchen and moved through the rooms of his house.

When he finally got to the den, Keller said, "Well, hello, Bascomb. Nice place you got here."

Keller, leading a scoundrel's life, had ended the lives of others in a great variety of ways. As far as he knew, though, he had never actually frightened anyone to death. For a moment, however, it looked as though Bascomb (née Farrar) might be the first. The man turned white as Wonder bread, took an involuntary step backward and clasped a hand to his chest. Keller hoped he wasn't going to need CPR.

"Easy," he said. "Grab a seat, why don't you? Sorry to startle you, but it seemed the best way. No names, no pack drill, right?"

"What do you think you're doing in my house?"

"A crossword puzzle, originally. Then when the light failed I had the TV on, and it's a lot better when you don't know what they're saying. Makes it more of an exercise for the imagination." He leaned back in his chair. "I'd have joined you for breakfast," he said, "but who knows if you even go out for it? Maybe you have your oat-bran muffin and decaf at the pine table in the kitchen. So I figured I'd come here."

"You're not supposed to get in touch with me at all," Farrar said sternly. "Under any circumstances."

"Give it up," Keller said. "It's not working."

Farrar didn't seem to hear him. "Since you're here," he said, "of course we'll talk. And there happens to be something I need to talk to you about. Just let me get my notes."

He slipped past Keller and was reaching into a desk drawer when Keller took him by the shoulders and turned him around. "Sit down," he said, "before you

"I have no children. I hired you as an au pair for me."

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WHERE & HOW TO BUY

Below is a list of retailers and manufacturers you can contact for information on where to find this month's merchandise. To buy the apparel and equipment shown on pages 26–27, 39, 41, 82–85, 110–111, 123 and 171, check the listings below to find the stores nearest you.

WIRED

Pages 26–27: "A Game in the Hand": **Handheld video games** by *Radica USA Ltd.*, 800-854-9551, www.radicagames.com. **Voice command game** by *Tiger Electronics*, 888-844-7767, www.tigertoys.com. "The Lone Clone": **Computer** by *UMAX*, 800-232-8629, www.supermac.com. "Wild Things": **Handheld global positioning system** by *Magellan Systems Corp.*, 800-707-5221, www.magellangps.com. **Stereo peripheral device** by *Virtual Listening Systems, Inc.*, 888-486-5832, www.vlsyoltec.com. **Home video hardware** by *Videonics*, 800-338-3348, www.videonics.com. "Multimedia Reviews & News": **Software:** By *Cyan*, from Broderbund, 800-521-6263, www.riven.com. By *Segasoft*, 888-734-2763, www.segasoft.com. By *Konami*, 847-215-5111, www.konami.com. By *Midway Home Entertainment*, 903-874-5092. By *Nyko Technology*, 888-444-6956. By *Activision*, 800-477-3650, www.activision.com. By *Nova Logic*, 800-858-1322, www.novalogic.com. By *Psygnosis*, 800-438-7794. By *Berkeley Systems, Inc.*, 800-527-7440. **Game gun** by *Nyko Technology*, 888-444-6956.

MANTRACK

Page 39: "Chain Smoker": **Mountain bike** by *Porsche*, 800-545-8039. Page 41: "Anasazi Getaway": *Inn of the Anasazi*, 800-688-8100. "Babe Magnets": **Magnetic frames** by *Takumi*, from Manhattan Design Studio, 800-707-8834.

TREND SPOTTING

Pages 82–85: **Jacket, trousers and shirt** by *Versace*, at Versace Boutiques. **Suit, shirt and tie** by *Boss Hugo Boss*, at Boss Hugo Boss Shops, Washington, DC, 202-625-2677 and King of Prussia, PA, 610-992-1400. **Suit, shirt and tie** by *Calvin Klein*, New York City, 212-292-9000. **Suit** and **T-shirt** by *Armani*, at Emporio Armani, New York City, 212-727-3240 and Beverly Hills, 310-271-7790. **Jacket, vest, shirt and tie** by *Joseph Abboud* at select Nordstrom stores. **Trousers** by *Joseph Abboud*, at select Bloomingdale's stores. **Suit** by *Polo by Ralph Lauren*, New York City, 212-606-2100. **Shirt and tie** by *Polo by Ralph Lauren*, at Polo/Ralph Lauren, New York City, 212-606-2100, Beverly Hills, 310-281-7200 and Saks Fifth Avenue, New York City, 212-753-4000.

OUT OF THE BLUE

Pages 110–111: **Shirts:** By *Valentino Uomo*, at Saks Fifth Avenue, New York City, 212-753-4000. By *Burberry*, at select Lord & Taylor stores. By *Ermenegildo Zegna*, New York City, 212-751-3468, Beverly Hills, 310-247-8827, Chicago, 312-587-9660. By *Burberry*, New York City, 212-532-1581 and Chicago, 312-787-2500. By *Geoffrey Beene*, at fine department stores.

ROBO WATCH

Page 123: **Watches:** From *MTX Paging Products LLC*, www.beepwear.com. By *Seiko*, 800-724-3585, www.messagewatch.com. By *Timex*, 800-367-8363, www.timex.com.

ON THE SCENE

Page 171: "Get Twisted": **Corkscrews:** From *Tuscan Square*, 212-977-7777. From *Bounty Hunter Rare Wine & Provisions*, 800-943-9463. From *Asprey*, 212-688-1811. From the *LS Collection*, 212-673-4575. From *Hammacher Schlemmer*, 800-233-4800, www.hammacher.com.

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embarrass yourself. I already found the gun and took out the bullets. Wouldn't you feel silly, pulling the trigger and—click?"

"I wasn't reaching for a gun."

"Maybe you wanted this, then," Keller said, dipping into his breast pocket. "A passport in the name of Roger Keith Bascomb, issued by the authority of the government of British Honduras. You know something? I looked on a map, and I couldn't *find* British Honduras."

"It's Belize now."

"But they kept the old name for the passports?" He whistled soundlessly. "I found the firm's literature in the same drawer with the passport. An outfit in the Caymans, and it offers what it calls fantasy passports. To protect yourself, in case you're abducted by terrorists who don't like Americans. Would you believe it—the same folks offer other kinds of fake IDs as well. Send them a check and a photo and they'll set you up as an agent of the National Security Resource. Wouldn't that be handy?"

"I don't know what you're talking about."

Keller sighed. "All right," he said. "Then I'll tell you. Your name isn't Roger Bascomb, it's Paul Farrar. You're not a government agent, you're some kind of paper pusher in the Social Security Administration."

"That's just a cover."

"You used to be married," Keller went on, "until your wife left you for another man. His name was Howard Ramsgate."

"Well," Farrar said.

"That was six years ago. So much for the heat of the moment."

"I just wanted to find the right way to do it."

"You found me," Keller said, "and got me to do it for you. And it worked, and if you'd left it like that you'd have been in the clear. But instead you sent me off to Florida to kill an old man in a wheelchair."

"Louis Drucker," Farrar said.

"Your uncle, your mother's brother. He didn't have any children of his own, and who do you think he would leave his money to?"

"What kind of a life did Uncle Lou have? Crippled, immobile, living on painkillers——"

"I guess we just did him a favor," Keller said. "The woman in Colorado used to live two doors down the street from you. I don't know what it was she did to get on your list. Maybe she jilted you or maybe she insulted you, or maybe her dog pooped on your lawn. What's the difference? The point is, you used me. You got me to chase around the country killing people."

"Isn't that what you do?"

"Right," Keller said, "and that's the part I don't understand. I don't know how you knew to call a certain number

in White Plains, but you did, and that got me on a train with a flower in my lapel. Why the charade? Why not just pay the money and let out the contract?"

"I couldn't afford it."

Keller nodded. "I thought that might be it. Theft of services, that's what we're looking at here. You had me do all this for nickels and dimes."

"Look," Farrar said, "I want to apologize to you."

"You do?"

"I do, I honestly do. The first time, with that bastard Ramsgate, well, it was the only way to do it. The other two times I could have afforded to pay you a suitable sum, but we'd already established a relationship. You were working, you know, out of patriotism, and it seemed safer and simpler to leave it at that."

"Safer."

"And simpler."

"And cheaper," Keller said, "at the time. But where are you in the long run?"

"What do you mean?"

"Well," Keller said, "what do you figure happens now?"

"You're not going to kill me."

"What makes you so sure?"

"You'd have done it," Farrar said. "We wouldn't be having this conversation. You want something, and I think I know what it is."

"A pat on the back," Keller said, "from the man who never inhaled."

"Money," Farrar said. "You want what's rightfully yours, the money you would have been paid if I hadn't misrepresented myself. That's it, isn't it?"

"It's close."

"Close?"

"What I want," Keller said, "is that and a little more. If I were the IRS, I would call the difference penalties and interest."

"How much?"

Keller named a figure, one large enough to make Farrar blink. He said it seemed high, and they kicked it around, and Keller found himself reducing the sum by a third.

"I can raise most of that," Farrar told him. "But I can't do it overnight. I'll have to sell some securities. I can have some of the cash by the end of the week, or by the beginning of next week at the latest."

"That's good," Keller said.

"And I will have some more work for you."

"More work?"

"That woman in Colorado," Farrar said. "You wondered what I had against her. There was something, a remark she made once, but that's not the point. I found a way to make myself a secondary beneficiary on an individual's government insurance policy. It's too complicated to explain, but it ought to work like a charm."

"That's pretty slick," Keller said, getting to his feet. "I'll tell you what, Farrar, I'm prepared to wait a week or so for the money, especially with the prospect of future work. But I would like some cash tonight as a binder. You must have some sort of money around the house."

"Let me see what I've got in the safe," Farrar said.

•

"Twenty-two thousand dollars," Keller said, slipping a rubber band around the bills and tucking them away. "That's what, $5500 a pop?"

"You'll get the balance next week," Farrar assured him. "Or a substantial portion of it, at the very least."

"Great."

"Anyway, where do you get $5500? There were three of them, and three into 22 is seven and a third. That makes it——" he frowned, calculating, "$7333 a head."

"Is that right?"

"And 33 cents," Farrar said.

Keller scratched his head. "Am I counting wrong? I would make it four people."

"Who's the fourth?"

"You are," Keller told him.

•

"If I had wanted to wait," he told Dot the next day, "I think he probably would have handed over a decent chunk of cash. But there was no way that I was going to let him see the sun come up."

"Because who knows what the little shit was going to do next."

"That's it," Keller said. "He was an amateur and a nutcase, and he'd already fooled me once."

"And once is enough."

"Once is plenty," Keller agreed. "He had it all worked out, you know. He would manipulate the Social Security records and get me to kill total strangers so that he could collect their benefits. Total strangers!"

"You generally kill total strangers, Keller."

"They're strangers to me," he said, "but not to the clients. Anyway, I decided to take a bird in the hand, and the bird comes to $22,000. I guess that's better than nothing."

"It was," Dot said, "last time I checked. And none of it was work, anyway. You did it for love."

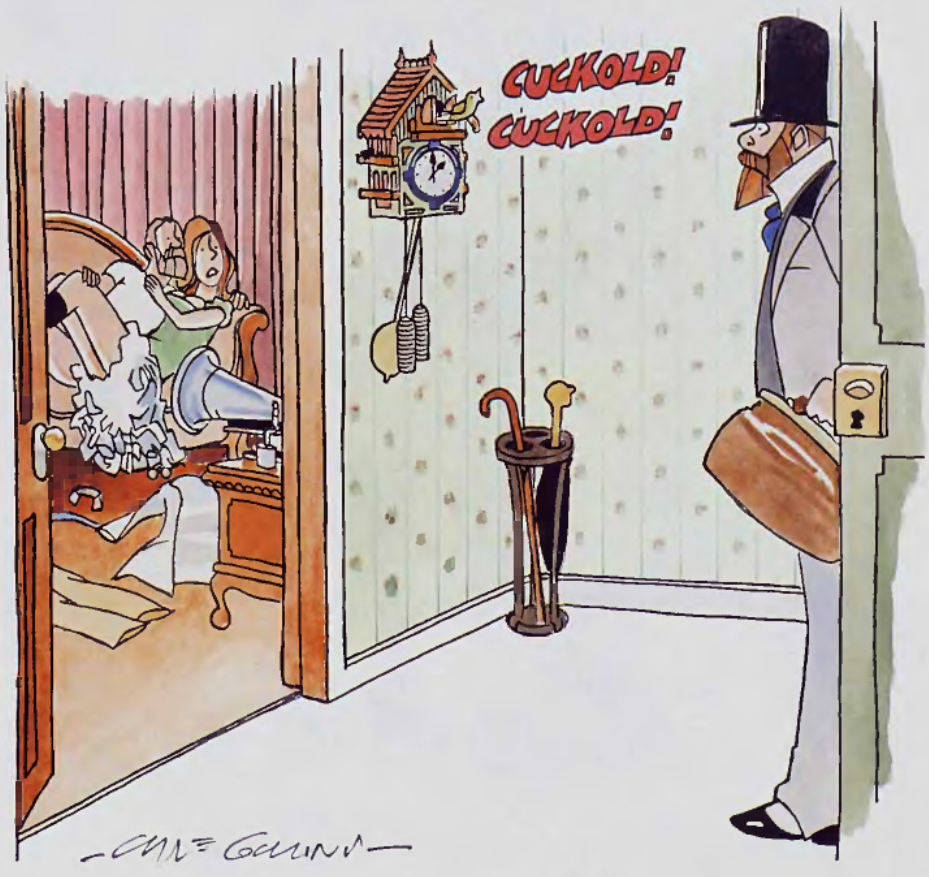
"Love?"

"Love of country. You're a patriot, Keller. After all, it's the thought that counts."

"If you say so."

"I say so. And I like the flower, Keller. I wouldn't think you would be the type to wear one, but I have to say you carry it off. It looks good. Adds a certain something."

"Panache," he said. "What else?"



HOSTAGE *(continued from page 86)*

"You got to be a man. I didn't start this, you started it. Eddie! Put Mary on the phone. Eddie?"

succeeded in getting him back on the phone, Lamage emitted a crabby, stiff laugh: "Ha, ha, ha. Can I ask you a question? What time is it now?"

"It's 12:30 . . . no, it's ten after one."

"Why don't you give me a time when I can pull the trigger on myself?"

"No, no, no, you ain't doing that," Panzarella said, softer but more quickly. If Lamage were to shoot himself, the primary objectives of the police—that no hostages or officers be hurt—would be met. But they didn't want him to die, either, and, more important, he was slipping into a dangerous emotional state. He felt his actions had no meaning and that violence was the remedy. Danger to the hostages grew as their number shrank.

"Don't give me that bullshit about killing yourself, about pulling the trigger."

"Then you can have everybody."

"No, no, I don't want you to do that. I don't want nobody then. If you're going to do that, I don't want anyone. I thought we were talking man to man here. Didn't I give you the fucking chicken? I gave you the soda and shit paper."

"Yeah, and I let people go."

"That's got nothing to do with what we're talking about now!" barked Panzarella, relentlessly focused on the present. "We're talking about coming out, so that nothing happens to anybody. These people are starting to get itchy, I'm telling you. You're the only fucking one who can do this."

"Frankly, I was expecting more than a goodnight kiss."

"Let me talk to Mary for a while."

"All right, you tell Mary what I said. I'll be right there with you, I swear to God, I swear on my kids. I want to fucking go home, Eddie. I'm tired."

"Give me some time to talk to her."

"OK, two minutes," Panzarella said, hanging up before Lamage could, to preserve the impression of control. When Panzarella called him back, Lamage sounded weak and tired: "There's just one more person I gotta talk to, and then it's gonna be over. And that's Ja."

"To Ja? You want to talk to Ja? But what about?"

"About the decision," he said, his voice breaking.

"Listen to me. I can't get ahold of Ja right now," Panzarella said, as Christine's 21-year-old daughter sat in the kitchen. Hostage takers sometimes make ritualistic demands (such as a last meal) when they intend to commit suicide, and Lamage's insistence on speaking with the various Hogan women seemed to fit that pattern. Some hostage takers fire a shot at police before making a futile rush outside with—as is discovered afterward—a gun emptied of bullets. The phenomenon is known as suicide by police.

"I don't know where Ja went," Panzarella continued. "This has to stop, they're breaking my balls——"

"I'm telling you, everybody will be cut loose. Free."

"I know that. Listen! I trust you. You trust me now——"

Lamage let out a long exhalation, and Panzarella took it as an assent. "OK, when you come out, I will personally get ahold of Ja and let you talk to her alone."

"Where is she?" Lamage asked, before breaking off to yell at the hostages. McGowan and the team agreed the situation had worsened.

"Eddie! Hey, what are you doing? Listen! If this were a pay phone, I'd be out of quarters. I'm going to put Ja on. You give me the babies. No, give me the babies first, then I'll put Ja on the phone. I want them right now. You're holding the ace, I'm only holding the king. Come on! Eddie, you there? Eddie? We're still here, you and me. Come on, I told you, you got to be a man about this. I didn't start this, you started it. Eddie! Put Mary on the phone. Eddie?"

Mary picked up, and Panzarella urged her to remind Lamage that the children had done him no harm. "Don't hang up! Don't forget I'm on the phone, honey!" he said, turning to confer with the team. Friends and family are rarely allowed to speak to the hostage taker, as it breaks the link with the negotiator, and old resentments and new demands can arise as conversation wanders. But McGowan decided that they needed to reduce the anxiety, and he asked Detective Gonzalez to prepare Ja. Gonzalez would tell

her to remain calm, to blame the police for any problems, and to continue to press Lamage to release the hostages. In the background, Lamage could be heard saying he'd let everyone go after he talked to Ja. Panzarella told the team, "He's changed. He's up high now. He told me 'fuck you,' and he never did that before." Panzarella hummed, "Pick up the phone, pick up the phone. . . ." The ESU cops yelled for Lamage to pick up the phone. Lamage told the hostages, "I don't mind dying, I'm going to die anyway." And then he released two more hostages. "We got two more kids!" A cop carried one child across the living room of the makeshift headquarters. Lamage finally picked up the phone.

"Where is Ja? I just let two go."

"All right, listen to me," Panzarella said. "I want you to start letting those people walk to the door, and I'll put her on the phone right now. OK? Ja, say hello."

"Hi, Edward," Ja said. Lamage began to protest but Panzarella cut him off: "No—I'm just going to let her say hello. Listen carefully——"

"I want to talk to her!"

"I'm going to let her say hello," Panzarella said. His voice changed to a full-throated roar: "But you have to do the fucking thing my way!"

"I let two go!"

"I know, now listen to me!"

"I got her daughter."

"Listen to me. I'm gonna put her on the phone right now. Tell those people to start walking to the door."

"Put her on."

Panzarella handed Ja the phone. "Hello?" she said.

"Hello?" said Lamage.

"Edward?" It wasn't his name, but Ja didn't know him well. It didn't seem to matter.

"Who's this?"

"It's Ja."

"Hold on . . . I just want to make sure. Prove it to me."

"You don't know me? You don't know my voice? You want me to scream and yell so you know my voice?" And then she softened. "This is me! It's me!"

"All right, I apologize," Lamage said. "Listen. I spoke to Chris and Mary."

"Are they coming out? My mother's real sick. Would you send her out so she could take her pills?"

"She took her pills already."

"What you want me to say? What you want me to listen to?"

"I let everybody go already," he said, then correcting, "I let out all the kids. It's only your daughter, and Mary——"

"Let my baby out now."

"I'm going to let everybody——"

"I'll hang up the phone. You let my baby out right now."

"All right, I'll——"

"Right now, while I'm talking. Let the baby go."

"All right, I'm going to let everybody out," Lamage said. He turned from the phone to say, "OK, put your coats on," and then, to Ja, "Your mother's getting their coats." Ja encouraged him, saying, "Go ahead, tell my mother to get my baby's coat, she has to bundle, 'cause it's cold outside." Gonzalez shook his head as he heard Lamage tell the hostages, "Stay here. Don't go anywhere yet." Gonzalez hissed to Ja, "Forget the coat, get them out!"

"All right, Edward," Ja said. "She doesn't need a coat. Just let her out." There was silence, and Ja called his name until he picked up again. Then he announced he would kill himself after letting everyone go. "Edward, let me talk to you," said Ja, soothingly. "Edward, you listening to me? Don't kill yourself, OK? You know I'll talk to you. You know I'll talk to you any time, Edward. Don't kill yourself. We'll always be here for you. We ain't going nowhere."

There was shouting, and McGowan pressed Ja to keep calling to him. She called out, "Edward! Edward! Edward!" as Christine screamed in the bathroom. "Just sit down and think! Let the baby out! Just give us the baby!" Ja shouted, "Edward! Now!" and McGowan said, "Keep going! You don't know when he's going to pick it up again. You're doing good!" Ja began to bellow names: "Edward! Mary! Mommy! Ma!" Gonzalez and McGowan urged Ja on as the ESU shouted in at Lamage to let the baby go. Christine's voice rose to a shriek: "Give us the baby!"

Over the tumult there was a faint *pop!* and then another, seconds later. It was as if the air had been sucked out of the room. Ja looked up, wide-eyed, and gazed out past the score of cops. It seemed that time did not pass, as if a single dreadful second caught. "He shot, he shot," Ja said. Panzarella lit his cigar.

The shouting started and movement resumed, and over the police radio a voice said, "Shots fired!" McGowan and Gonzalez shouted to Ja, "Talk! Talk! Keep talking!" The door team stormed the apartment, and then came the hollow boom of an explosion. "Keep talking," McGowan told Ja. "This is ongoing." Another cop called, "The baby's all right!" Ja broke down as the hostages began to come out.

•

What had happened was that Lamage had continued to hold the baby even after he promised to release everyone, but he put the baby down to argue with Mary and Christine. Then Christine snatched up the baby and ran. Lamage raised his gun as she fled and fired at her. The bullet pierced the padded shoulder of her coat, passing inches from her head and even closer to the child's. The door team barreled down the hall as Lamage slammed the

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bathroom door and shot himself in the stomach. A cop broke through and tossed in a flash grenade, which knocked Mary into the bathtub, singeing her coat but leaving her unharmed. The cop dove into the bathroom and wrestled the gun from Lamage. He was handcuffed and taken to medics waiting in the hall. The remaining hostages were led out, examined for injury and then debriefed by detectives. When Mary walked out, Ja erupted in anger, shouting, "She brought him into the house!" Gonzalez held Ja back as another detective led Mary away, holding her arm and consoling her, "It's OK, honey, it was just the grenade." The police officers packed up their equipment and filed out toward the cameras or their cars. Their hosts and the hostages were free to go to bed.

•

For all their successes, the most skilled hostage negotiators admit that their discipline consists of a modest handful of prescriptions and tips. For better and for worse, human behavior eludes prediction and control. But negotiators are guided by the belief that people can speak to each other, for a time, even when they are filled with hatred or hopelessness. For Edwin Lamage, such times were episodic, transient and, combined with his poor marksmanship, just sufficient to permit the safe release of fourteen people. The justice system took care of Lamage, who is currently spending ten to life in prison for holding Mary and the others hostage.

"You can taste these things sometimes," McGowan reflected. "It starts to flow, and seconds later it goes down the toilet. There's no magic word—you build up trust, reduce fear. The balance of power never really changes; the perception does. We're not like car salesmen, getting the ransom down from $2 million to $1 million. It's more like an ocean liner that picks up a harbor pilot coming into port who helps them through the shoals.

"This kind of 'talk tactic,' or 'soft' police work, has a lot of applications. Once, I arrived on the scene and a woman yelled out, 'All these cops just to kill one man!' And I said to her, 'Ma'am, it's taking all these cops not to kill one man.' We're not sitting around waiting for the morgue truck. Words are so powerful sometimes. All the mind games, trying to see who wins—it's bad. The way we try to play it, everybody wins."

"Of course they're not real books. I'm a shyster."

Best Restaurants

(continued from page 92)

executive chef Dean Fearing stops by your table and asks, with a friendly drawl, "How's your lobster taco?" Or he may inquire about your Texas escargot glazed with ginger-lemon sauce or your antelope-and-barbecued-venison fajitas. As incongruous as these dishes may seem in such sumptuous surroundings, Fearing's food is delicious, Texan and a lot of fun. Be prepared to part with some tycoon-class change when the bill arrives.

(14) **Gotham Bar and Grill,** 12 East 12th Street, New York City (212-620-4020). Even without its replica of the Statue of Liberty, which stands in an alcove of the cavernous dining room, Gotham Bar and Grill is perhaps the quintessential upscale New York restaurant, embodying all that the big town is known for: energy, sophistication, innovation and fun. In this soaring space with its signature parachute-draped light fixtures, Manhattan's vertical lines are mirrored in chef-owner Alfred Portale's towering dishes. His seafood salad, an ephemeral piece of food sculpture made with octopus, lobster, shrimp, avocado and red leaf lettuce, is almost too attractive to eat. But Portale's creations aren't cutesy cuisine. They're some of the best-tasting fancy food in America. Entrees such as halibut, Maine lobster tails, saddle of rabbit and roast pheasant taste like great French country cooking and come with homey accompaniments: fingerling potatoes, braised red cabbage, brussels sprout leaves and roasted shallots. There's a well-chosen 20,000-bottle wine list and service that's expert and friendly. Gotham's $19.98 three-course lunch is probably the best fine-dining bargain in America.

(15) **Union Square Café,** 21 East 16th Street, New York City (212-243-4020). The ingredients that have made Union Square Café one of America's most successful restaurants are first-rate service, a stylish ambiance, large portions of homey but sophisticated food and an excellent wine list that is a bargain, given today's prices. Union Square Café was named the James Beard Foundation's restaurant of the year in 1997 and the 1997 *Zagat Survey* chose it as New York's most popular restaurant. Chef and coowner Michael Romano's hearty American dishes have global influences (Italian country, French classic, Indian). A typical meal might consist of homemade "handkerchief" pasta with marjoram-and-zucchini sauce, Sicilian-style roast pheasant and a warm apple tart with almond crunch and butter brickle ice cream. Lunch or dinner for two with wine seldom tops $125.

(16) **Emeril's,** 800 Tchoupitoulas Street, New Orleans (504-528-9393). Chef Emeril Lagasse's cooking show, *The*

Choice Critics

Adrienne Asher-Gepford, Schramsberg Vineyards, Calistoga, CA
Mario Batali, owner and chef, Po Restaurant, New York City
David Benton, vice president and general manager, Rittenhouse Hotel, Philadelphia
Dan Berger, wine columnist, *Los Angeles Times*
Karen Berk, editor for the *Zagat Survey*, Los Angeles
Anthony Dias Blue, wine and spirits editor, *Bon Appétit*, San Francisco
Daniel Boulud, chef and owner, Restaurant Daniel, New York City
Tina Breslow, chief partner, Breslow Partners; Philadelphia Advisory Board, James Beard Foundation
Teresa Byrne-Dodge, publisher and editor, *My Table: A Critic's Guide to Dining in Houston*
Janet Lai Cam, restaurant consultant, Pittsburgh
Providence Cicero, food editor, *Seattle Magazine*
Jane Citron, food editor of *Pittsburgh Magazine*
Joan Clarke, food editor of *The Honolulu Advertiser*
Andrea Clurfeld, restaurant critic and food editor, *Asbury Park Press*, NJ
Suzanne Corbett, food editor, *St. Louis Bugle*
Jeff Cox, restaurant and wine writer, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*
Joe Crea, food editor, *The Toledo Blade*, *Zagat Survey*, Ohio
Doug Crichton, editor in chief, *Cooking Light*, Birmingham, AL
Sanford D'Amato, chef and owner, Sanford Restaurant, Milwaukee
Robert Del Grande, chef and owner, Café Annie, Houston
John Doerper, publisher and editor, *Pacific Epicure*, Bellingham, WA
Roberto Donna, chef and owner, Galileo Restaurant, Washington, D.C.
Paul Draper, winemaker, Ridge Vineyards, Cupertino, CA
George Faison, president, D'Artagnan Inc., Newark, NJ
Susan Feniger, chef and owner, Border Grill, Santa Monica
Barbara Pool Fenzl, owner, Les Gourmettes Cooking School, Phoenix
Bobby Flay, chef and owner, Mesa Grill, Bolo/Mesa City, New York City
Lynn Fredericks, food and wine writer, *Santé*; *Fine Cooking Magazine*; *Wine News*, New York City
Alain Gayot, publisher and editor in chief, Gayot/Gault Millau guides, Los Angeles
George Germon, chef and owner, Al Forno, Providence, RI
Rozanne Gold, author and executive culinary director, Joseph Baum/Michael Whiteman Co., New York City
Randall Grahm, president, Bonny Doon Vineyards, Santa Cruz, CA
Dotty Griffith, restaurant critic, *Dallas Morning News*
Fred Griffith, interviewer and host, *Morning Exchange WEWS-TV*, Cleveland
Linda Chesney Griffith, food and wine writer, Cleveland Heights
Vincent Guerithault, chef and owner, Vincent's on Camelback, Phoenix
Ann Haigh, restaurant editor, *Pittsburgh Magazine*
Karen Haram, food and wine editor, *San Antonio Express-News*
Joanne Hayes, food editor, *Country Living*, New York City
John Heckathorn, restaurant critic, *Honolulu Magazine*; KHNR-Radio
Bob Hosman, wine and restaurant critic, *Sun-Sentinel* and *South Florida Magazine*, Miami
Barbara Kafka, author and food writer, New York City
Johanne Killeen, owner, Al Forno, Providence, RI
Fredric Koeppel, restaurant critic, *The Commercial Appeal*, Memphis
Dolores Kostelni, restaurant critic, *The Roanoke Times*
Elizabeth Kuehner-Smith, associate publisher, *Wine News*, Coral Gables, FL
Gray Kunz, executive chef, Lespinasse, St. Regis Hotel, New York City
Bob Lape, restaurant critic, *Crain's New York Business* and WCBS-Radio
Robin Leach, television personality
John Lehndorff, food editor and columnist, *Daily Camera* and *Knight-Ridder Tribune*, Boulder, CO
Nancy Leson, restaurant critic, *The Seattle Times*; editor, *Zagat Survey*, Seattle
Michael Lomonaco, executive chef, Windows on the World, New York City; host of *Michael's Place* on the Food Network
Patricia Mack, food editor, *The Record*, Hackensack, NJ
Elliott Mackle, dining critic, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*
George Mahaffey, chef, Restaurant at the Little Nell, Aspen
Waldy Malouf, executive chef, Rainbow, New York City
John Mariani, food and wine critic, *The Wine Spectator*, *Esquire*, Prodigy, New York City
John Martellaro, restaurant critic, *The Kansas City Star*
Julie Mautner, managing editor, *Food Arts*, New York City
Michael McCarty, owner, Michael's Santa Monica and Michael's New York
Peter Meltzer, writer, *Wine Spectator*
Danny Meyer, co-owner, Union Square Café/Gramercy Tavern, New York City
Mark Miller, chef and owner, Coyote Café, Santa Fe, NM and Red Sage Restaurant, Washington, D.C.
Pat Mozersky, food columnist, *San Antonio Express-News*
Dr. Su Hua Newton, owner, Newton Vineyards, St. Helena, CA
Will Norton Jr., dean, University of Nebraska; James Beard awards judge
Janice Okun, food editor and restaurant critic, *The Buffalo News*
Carolyn O'Neil, senior correspondent, *On the Menu* on CNN, Atlanta
Ronn Owens, talk-show host, KGO-Radio, San Francisco
Charles Palmer, chef and owner, Aureole, New York City
Tom Passavant, editor in chief, *Diversion Magazine*, New York City
Jacques Pépin, chef, author, television personality
Alfred Portale, executive chef, Gotham Bar and Grill, New York City
Stephan Pyles, chef and owner, Star Canyon and Aquaknox, Dallas
Jane Rayburn, restaurant critic, *The Detroit News*
Alan Richman, restaurant critic, *Gentlemen's Quarterly*, New York City
Phyllis Richman, restaurant critic, *The Washington Post*
Earlene Ridge, restaurant critic, *The Arizona Daily Star*, Tucson
David Rosengarten, restaurant critic, *Gourmet*; host of *In Food Today* on the Food Network, New York City
Irene Sax, food writer, Disney Online
Mat Schaffer, restaurant critic, Microsoft Sidewalk, Boston
Jimmy Schmidt, chef and owner, Rattlesnake Club, Detroit
Helen Schwab, restaurant critic, *The Charlotte Observer*, NC
John Shafer, president, Shafer Vineyards, Napa, CA
Patricia Sharpe, restaurant reviewer and food editor, *Texas Monthly*, Austin
Lydia Shire, chef and owner, Biba/Pignoli, Boston
Muriel Stevens, food editor and restaurant critic, *Las Vegas Sun*
Tom Stockley, wine and beverage columnist, *The Seattle Times*
Allen Susser, chef and owner, Chef Allen's, North Miami Beach
Lettie Teague, wine editor, *Food & Wine*, New York City
Adam Tihany, restaurant designer, Adam Tihany International, New York City
Michael Todd, publisher, *GrapeZine Magazine*, Sag Harbor, NY
Norman Van Aken, chef and owner, Norman's, Coral Gables, FL
Phil Vettel, restaurant critic for the *Chicago Tribune*
S. Irene Virbila, restaurant critic, *Los Angeles Times*
Alice Waters, chef and owner, Chez Panisse, Berkeley, CA
Jasper White, chef, consultant and author, Jasper White Inc., Lincoln, MA
Michael Whiteman, partner, Joseph Baum/Michael Whiteman Co., New York City

Essence of Emeril (Food Network), was rated one of the top ten television programs in 1996 by *Time* magazine. A top gun in restaurant-crazy New Orleans (though he's from Fall River, Massachusetts), Lagasse oversees his restaurant in a big former warehouse, and packs in several hundred diners nightly for such Cajun- and Creole-influenced dishes as cornmeal-coated fried Plaquemine oyster salad with jalapeño-cilantro dressing, and Mississippi farm-raised quail with andouille-and-cheese-laced grits. Although he often says, "We're not building a rocket ship here, we're just cooking,"

Regional Favorites

The restaurants on this list missed making our top 25 by a few points. Some are funky favorites for critics and chefs. Others are hot new spots that everyone is talking about.

ALABAMA

Highlands Bar & Grill, South Birmingham, 205-939-1400

ARIZONA

Janos, Tucson, 520-884-9426
Mary Elaine's at the Phoenician, Scottsdale, 602-423-2530
Vincent's on Camelback, Phoenix, 602-224-0225

CALIFORNIA

Aqua, San Francisco, 415-956-9662
Boulevard, San Francisco, 415-543-6084
Campanile, Los Angeles, 213-938-1447
Catahoula Restaurant and Saloon, Calistoga, 707-942-2275
Chinois on Main, Santa Monica, 310-392-9025
Farallon, San Francisco, 415-956-6969
Globe, San Francisco, 415-391-4132
Jardiniere, San Francisco, 415-861-5555
Masa's, San Francisco, 415-989-7154
Matsuhisa, Beverly Hills, 310-659-9639
Pacific's Edge at the Highlands Inn, Carmel, 408-624-3801
Pinot Blanc, St. Helena, 707-963-6191
Postrio, San Francisco, 415-776-7825
Restaurant Jozu, Los Angeles, 213-655-5600
Rose Pistola, San Francisco, 415-399-0499
Slanted Door, San Francisco, 415-861-8032
Spago, Beverly Hills, 310-385-0880
Stars, San Francisco, 415-861-7827
Terra, St. Helena, 707-963-8931
Tra Vigne, St. Helena, 707-963-4444
Vida, Los Angeles, 213-660-4446

COLORADO

Renaissance, Aspen, 970-925-2402
Restaurant at the Little Nell, Aspen, 970-920-6330

CONNECTICUT

Restaurant Jean-Louis, Greenwich, 203-622-8450
West Street Grill, Litchfield, 860-567-3885

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Galileo, 202-293-7191
Kinkead's, 202-296-7700
Vidalia, 202-659-1990

FLORIDA

Chef Allen's, North Miami Beach, 305-935-2900
Joe's Stone Crab, Miami Beach, 305-673-0365
Mark's Las Olas, Fort Lauderdale, 954-463-1000
Pacific Time, Miami Beach, 305-534-5979

GEORGIA

Bacchanalia, Atlanta, 404-365-0410
Brasserie Le Coze, Atlanta, 404-266-1440
The Dining Room at the Ritz-Carlton, Atlanta, 404-237-2700

HAWAII

Alan Wong's, Honolulu, 808-949-2526
Hoku's at Kahala Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Oahu, 808-739-8777
A Pacific Cafe, Oahu, 808-593-0035
Roy's, Honolulu, 808-396-7697
Sam Choy's, Honolulu, 808-334-1213

ILLINOIS

Arun's, Chicago, 773-539-1909
Everest, Chicago, 312-663-8920
Le Français, Wheeling, 847-541-7470
Red Light, Chicago, 312-733-8880
Spiaggia, Chicago, 312-280-2750
Trio, Evanston, 847-733-8746

LOUISIANA

Bayona, New Orleans, 504-525-4455
Mothers, New Orleans, 504-523-9656
NOLA, New Orleans, 504-522-6652

MASSACHUSETTS

Biba, Boston, 617-426-7878
Hammersley's Bistro, Boston, 617-423-2700
Legal Sea Foods, Boston, 617-426-4444
Olives, Charlestown, 617-242-9715

MICHIGAN

Chianti Tuscan Grill, Ann Arbor, 313-332-0800
Five Lakes Grill, Milford, 248-684-7455
Tapawingo, Ellsworth, 616-588-7971
Tribute, Farmington Hills, 248-848-9393

MISSOURI

Tony's, St. Louis, 314-231-7007

NEVADA

Napa, Las Vegas, 702-247-7961

NEW JERSEY

Restaurant Serenade, Chatham, 973-701-0303
The Ryland Inn, Whitehouse, 908-534-4011

NEW MEXICO

Coyote Café, Santa Fe, 505-983-1615

NEW YORK CITY

An American Place, 212-684-2122
Balthazar, 212-965-1414
Blue Ribbon, 212-274-0404
Chanterelle, 212-966-6960
Felidia, 212-758-1479
The Four Seasons, 212-754-9494
Gertrude's, 212-888-9127
Gramercy Tavern, 212-477-1025
Les Célébrités, 212-484-5113
Lutèce, 212-752-2225
Molyvos, 212-582-7500
Montrachet, 212-219-2777
Oceana, 212-759-5941
Patria, 212-777-6211
Payard, 212-717-5252
Picholine, 212-724-8585
Po, 212-645-2189
San Domenico, 212-265-5959
Sea Grill at Rockefeller Center, 212-332-7610
Union Pacific, 212-995-8500

NORTH CAROLINA

Magnolia Grill, Durham, 919-286-3609

OREGON

Couvron, Portland, 503-225-1844
Wildwood, Portland, 503-248-9663

PENNSYLVANIA

Steelhead Grill, Pittsburgh, 412-394-3474
Susanna Foo, Philadelphia, 215-545-2666

RHODE ISLAND

Al Forno, Providence, 401-273-9760
New Rivers, Providence, 401-751-0350

SOUTH CAROLINA

Peninsula Grill, Charleston, 803-723-0700

TEXAS

The Riviera, Dallas, 214-351-0094
Ruggles Grill, Houston, 713-524-3839
Tony's, Houston, 713-622-6778

WASHINGTON

Campagne, Seattle, 206-728-2800
Flying Fish, Seattle, 206-728-8595
Fullers-Sheraton Hotel & Towers, Seattle, 206-447-5544
The Herb Farm, Fall City, 206-784-2222
Lampreia, Seattle, 206-443-3301
Rover's, Seattle, 206-325-7442

WISCONSIN

Sanford, Milwaukee, 414-276-9608

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Lagasse takes his work seriously. He raises his own hogs to ensure the quality of his andouille sausage, bacon and hams, makes his own cheese, ice cream and Worcestershire sauce and has more than a dozen farmers producing food for his restaurants, which include Emeril's in the Warehouse District, NOLA's in the French Quarter and Emeril's New Orleans Fish House in Las Vegas.

(17) **Valentino,** 3115 West Pico Boulevard, Santa Monica (310-829-4313). Piero Selvaggio, a restaurateur with movie-star looks, has presided over his Italian culinary domain for more than 25 years. Selvaggio's determination in searching out the finest ingredients, both domestic and imported from small producers, is the hallmark of this bastion of fine contemporary Italian cuisine. Valentino offers a $59 extravaganza menu, selected daily by chef Angelo Auriana. We recommend the sashimi-like *storione affumicato* (Italian smoked sturgeon) with blood-orange vinaigrette, fusilli with duck ragout, or osso buco. Sample a bottle of wine from Selvaggio's multimillion-dollar cellar (the encyclopedic list has ten pages of Piemontese wines alone).

(18) **Aureole,** 34 East 61st Street, New York City (212-319-1660). On a typical Friday night, Aureole serves 300 people "progressive" domestic cuisine rated the best in the U.S. by the *Zagat Survey 1997*. The restaurant's cream-colored walls with sandstone animal-and-foliage reliefs and its muted floral displays create a relaxed atmosphere that complements chef Charlie Palmer's vividly colorful, artistic, almost architectural dishes. His five-course "celebration menu of great American food" is $85, and there is a $65 three-course menu that requires you to choose among two dozen first- and main-course items. You might begin with the sweet corn, leek and bay shrimp chowder, for example, and follow with anise-seared Cervena venison mignons with sun-dried currants. Leave room for the rich, whimsical desserts—some of which could be scale models for a futuristic movie set.

(19) **Fleur de Lys,** 777 Sutter Street, San Francisco (415-673-7779). French-born chef and co-owner Hubert Keller is renowned for his artfully presented French classical cuisine with Mediterranean accents and California touches. In what could be the most romantic dining room in America, wall sconces cast a candlelight glow over hundreds of yards of draped red-patterned sepia cloth accented by wall-to-ceiling mirrors and a Venetian glass chandelier. This fantastic atmosphere calls for a bottle of champagne from Fleur de Lys' extensive wine list to accompany Keller's "symphony" of small appetizers, which might include a Hudson Valley foie gras terrine and tiny crab cakes and lobster rolls. Continue with the crispy veal sweetbreads with

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artichokes and leeks in a truffle vinaigrette, followed by grilled venison tournedos on braised endive with lingonberry sauce, a selection of French cheeses with walnut bread and chocolate orange pie with pink grapefruit–and–vermouth sorbet. There is a $68 four-course tasting menu and a vegetarian menu.

(20) **Le Cirque 2000,** 455 Madison Avenue, New York City (212-794-9292). Le Cirque reigned for two decades as New York City's top glamour-and-power restaurant until it was transformed last year into Le Cirque 2000, a restaurant for a new century rebuilt at enormous expense by the Sultan of Brunei as the showpiece for his Palace Hotel. Le Cirque 2000 is a three-ring extravaganza comprising two main dining rooms and a bar. The Adam Tihany–designed interior—with its bright red-and-yellow, lime green and cobalt blue furnishings and neon-accented tubing—takes some getting used to. But Le Cirque is still the hottest ticket in town and continues to draw plenty of celebrities. Its classical French food with nouvelle touches earned four stars from *The New York Times*. Expect to spend $400 to $500 for dinner for two. Enjoy the show.

(21) **Norman's,** 21 Almeria Avenue, Coral Gables, Florida (305-446-6767). Chef-owner Norman Van Aken is credited with coining the term fusion cooking. Fusion to Van Aken means a blend of Asian, old- and new-world ideas, techniques and ingredients. Layered fieldstone-faced wood-burning ovens give Norman's a rustic feel, and with its terracotta walls, marble floors and Moorish arches, the dining room is decidedly south-Florida Spanish. Even the wine list is divided into old-world and new-world selections. There's a seven-course $60 degustation, but the first time at Norman's, you may want to try his signature conch chowder with saffron, toasted coconut, star anise and oranges, and his rum-and-pepper-painted grouper on a mango-habanero *mojo*.

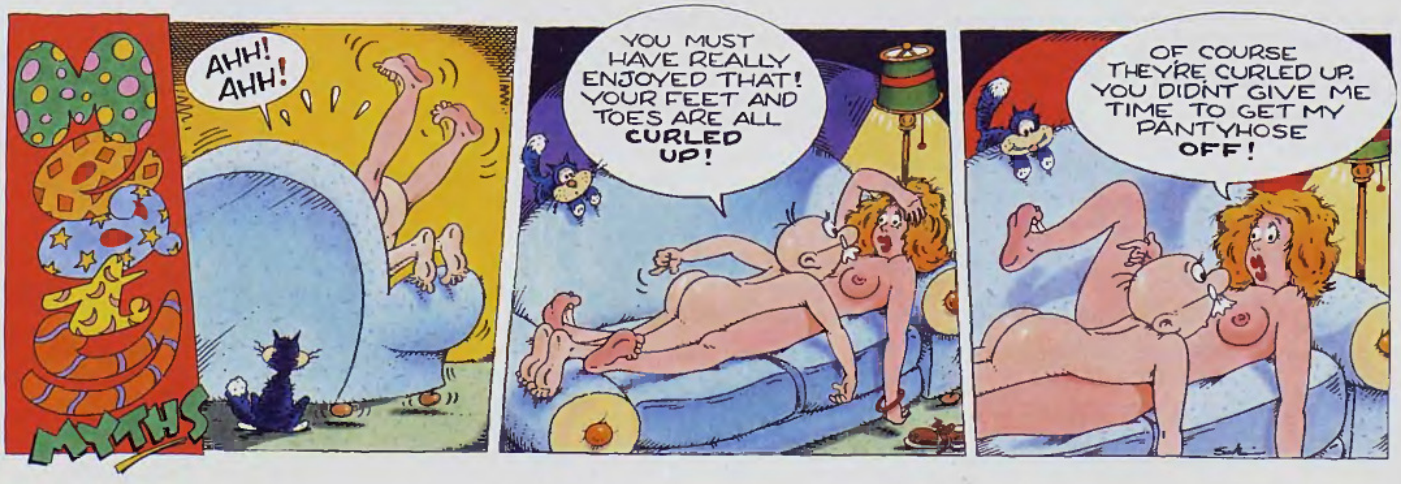
(22) **Café Annie,** 1728 Post Oak Boulevard, Houston (713-840-1111). Robert Del Grande, the handsome chef-partner of Café Annie, couples his knowledge of the chemistry of food (he has a doctorate in biochemistry) with his own fine palate. The result is original combinations such as mussel soup with cilantro and serrano chilies, garnished with ancho chili jam; and south Texas antelope with dried cherries and cascabel chili sauce, served with Belgian endive braised with bacon and wild mushrooms. Café Annie costs about $100 per person for dinner with wine, but at midday there is a $25 two-course-with-dessert "city lunch."

(23) **Star Canyon,** 3102 Oaklawn Avenue, Dallas (214-520-7827). At the top of the menu it says: "Welcome to Star Canyon, where the snakes are meaner, the service is friendlier and the grub is grander." The grub is the "new Texas" cuisine of Stephan Pyles, who (along with Dean Fearing and Robert Del Grande) is one of the pioneers of the genre. Although the snake handles on the front doors aren't mean by our standards, Pyles makes a mean fried-green-tomato salad with Dallas mozzarella, rosemary-balsamic vinaigrette and black pepper–masa crackers. He's also noted for his signature tamale tart with roasted-garlic custard, braised rabbit and wild mushrooms; and his red chili–brined pork chop with bourbon-mustard sauce, three-bean salad and house-made barbecued potato chips. The decor is straight out of a Texas cattle baron's fantasy: an oak-paneled ceiling branded with the names of Texas towns, and tooled saddle-leather furnishings. The wine list features a page of "domestics" (from Texas) and several pages of "imports" (from everywhere else). Dinner for two with wine will cost about $150.

(24) **Commander's Palace,** 1403 Washington Avenue, New Orleans (504-899-8231). The Brennan family's venerable culinary pleasure palace, ensconced in a historic turquoise-and-white Victorian mansion in the Garden District, is a fixture on our Critics' Choice list. Commander's Palace, whose previous chefs were Paul Prudhomme, Emeril Lagasse and Frank Brigtsen, received the James Beard Foundation's award for the outstanding restaurant in America in 1996. "Some like it hot. Some like it haute!" reads the heading on the menu, to distinguish chef Jamie Shannon's haute Creole cooking (a sophisticated cuisine that is derived from Spanish, French and African influences) from Cajun food, which Shannon describes as a "one-pot" style of cooking. Commander's Palace has a "complete dinners" menu that offers a choice of appetizers, salad and such entrees as grilled gulf fish with a Louisiana legumes ragout, and Louisiana crawfish maque choux (corn, okra, onions, bell peppers and crawfish tails in an Acadian crawfish sauce with popcorn rice), plus dessert (pecan pie à la mode, perhaps?). There is also an à la carte menu, a huge wine list and the famous jazz brunch on weekends.

(25) **Le Bec-Fin,** 1523 Walnut Street, Philadelphia (215-567-1000). Le Bec-Fin, which celebrated its 25th season in 1995, and its chef and owner, Georges Perrier, have won numerous awards. Perrier is a perfectionist who insists that a member of his staff be in the market daily before dawn to select only the freshest produce. He has also had the silk-covered walls in his Louis XVI dining room padded to mute noise. And his exceptional wine list has brought Le Bec-Fin national stature. Although the restaurant is elegant and the menu is unapologetically French (only two dishes have English translations), Le Bec-Fin is anything but stuffy. The unpredictable Perrier has been known to charge into the dining room wielding a saber to lop the cork off a bottle of bubbly. The chef has lightened the sauces used in his appetizers and entrees over the years, but he doesn't hedge on his desserts. Indulge your sweet tooth with what's displayed on Le Bec-Fin's renowned sweets trolley.

That's it for our critics' choices for the best restaurants of 1998. Some are big, some are intimate, some charge mind-boggling prices and some are surprisingly reasonable. But all offer dining experiences you won't soon forget.


AHH! AHH!
MYTHS
YOU MUST HAVE REALLY ENJOYED THAT! YOUR FEET AND TOES ARE ALL CURLED UP!
OF COURSE THEY'RE CURLED UP. YOU DIDN'T GIVE ME TIME TO GET MY PANTYHOSE OFF!

KEVIN KLINE *(continued from page 66)*

Everybody wants their viscera jump-started so they can feel something. Life is often a numbing process.

family. I've been told there are certain advantages to being in Hollywood, but they are far outweighed by the advantages of staying here. The theater is enough of a reason.

PLAYBOY: Are you worried about the future of serious theater at a time when public funding is threatened?

KLINE: The one time I've taken a political stand is when the NEA was being threatened. I went with Joseph Papp to Washington and met with congressmen and senators to talk about about it. The fact is, the amount of money in that budget is a drop in a bucket. I find it appalling that the men who govern the country think the arts are superfluous. They are a crucial part of our existence. No, we don't need the arts to survive, at least on a superficial level. They're extraneous. But on a spiritual level, you had better have art to counterbalance the madness of our technological, industrial, urban lives. You'd better have a concomitant agenda of art as psychic, spiritual medicine, as preventive medicine, for healing.

PLAYBOY: How do you respond when people say that the arts should pay for themselves?

KLINE: Fine, if you want a steady diet of lowest common denominator, easily accessible, stereotypical television and film. That's what you'll get. There's certainly a hunger for it. Everybody wants their viscera jump-started, and to be entertained in some way, so they can feel something, anything, because so much of our society mitigates feeling. Life is often a numbing process. We become numb to protect ourselves. We have learned to shut down to survive. We're bombarded with indiscriminate information and end up shutting off, emotionally and spiritually. We're just closing doors to keep sane. But those doors should remain open. Pretty soon the only thing that will be defined as art is that which makes you feel something.

It's not that all art has to be sophisticated and cerebral. I have contributed in my own small way to mindless entertainment. But there are subtler, more refined planes of feeling and thought that are not addressed by most of the mainstream. Art doesn't have to have profound intellectual content. It can contain an idea that challenges you, provokes you, subverts you—somehow makes you face the human condition. It keeps us in contact with our humanity. You need art to bring you face-to-face with what's beautiful, enduring, profound, even confusing.

I know I'm sounding awfully serious, but I can again blame Chekhov. I'm playing a character who is cursed with taking himself too seriously, who is ultimately driven to madness because of it. This would be a different interview if I were in the middle of *In and Out*, say. But it's important to remember that there is another side to the bleakness in Chekhov, or any other great art. There's hopefulness. Nabokov, in one of his lectures, said that even though Chekhov wrote about sad, tormented people, he was not a negative or gloomy person. In the people he created, there's always a sense of what they could be. There's tremendous yearning for a lost idealism, lost youth, a lost sense of beauty and love. He always has people caught in terrible situations, but there is something life affirming. And in the end, great art reminds us of what life really is—and what it can be.

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Guide to Dating

(continued from page 79)

worry about conversational skills or remember niggling details like her name. Park yourself at a table and try to look cool, or get out on the floor and try to look cool, or head for the bathroom and try to look cool. It doesn't matter who you are, what you do or whether you speak the Queen's English so long as you reek of all things cool. If you know the club's liquor distributor, fire inspector or garbage collector (or just know a guy who does), you can also get a VIP pass—which cements your coolness, you supercool dude, you.

Downside: Who really wants to date an eating-disordered model wannabe? Odds are she actually works in retail and has more relationship issues than you can shake a stick at. And while we're at it, don't go shaking sticks. God knows what repressed memory that could dredge up. It comes down to a basic issue: Do you really want to stalk the short-lived, fragile life-form known as cool? Clubbing turns into a big game about pecking order, and if you're unlucky you'll be at the top one day. As you're being ushered into a throbbing ex-warehouse with a bevy of wired jail-bait cuties hanging on every twitch of your Marlboro, you're going to wonder why you didn't get a life instead.

Bottom Line: Clubs work if your standards are low. But why not save the money you're blowing on Armani Exchange and embark on more-creative pursuits like auto theft or narcolepsy?

WORK

Upside: Try before you buy. You get to know her, she gets to know you and you both have a frame of reference beyond beer breath. Although she may still suspect that you are a woman-hating serial killer, the fact that you behave normally at work may allay her fears for a while. To top it off, according to a study by Sanford Braver, a psychologist at Arizona State University, the more handsome you are, the less likely you are ever to be accused of misconduct. It would seem the beautiful can do no wrong.

Downside: Professor Braver also discovered that if a man was unattractive, he couldn't say "hello" without it being construed as sexual harassment. The moral of this story is clear: Life ain't fair, particularly when you're ugly. And breaking up is a problem. You will still see plenty of her around the office. Unless you enjoy strained smiles and cold stares, think twice before pirating the company software.

Bottom Line: Obviously, if you aren't as good-looking as you think, it's firing-and-fining time for your sorry ass—no matter how subtle your moves. Sure, there's been a backlash against sexual harassment suits in the past few years, but who's to say there won't be a backlash against the backlash? And then a backlash against all the previous backlashes? Sexual politics move so quickly that by the time we've noticed a trend, added it to the newest version of our upcoming book and waited for our publisher to consult the bones of his ancestors and ship the thing into bookstores, we're already one backlash behind. For now we'll just say that the office is a decent place to meet women, sort of, depending on the time of year and what kind of hair day you're having. We'd say more but we feel a backlash coming.

WEDDINGS

Upside: People are relaxed. Romance is in the air. The champagne is flowing. She's dressed up. You're dressed up. Odds are one of you has a hotel room. By the time the reception starts everyone's past the jitters from watching a friend get hitched and they're feeling sentimental about the guy-girl thing. There are oodles of excuses—from "How 'bout that cake?" to "How 'bout that DJ?"—to introduce yourself without seeming like a freak or a pervert. The labyrinthine defenses of the average woman are at an all-time low. Like we said, one, or both, of you has a hotel room. And it's nearby, so let's go on up, just, you know, to talk and stuff, and what room number are you in again?

Downside: Somebody's uncle will get overexcited and vomit on a table. Trust us on this one, and try not to be there when it happens. You should also try to be across the room when somebody's father vomits on a table. Also, steer clear of the bride's father; he'll just talk about how much everything costs. But it's OK to sit at the table where somebody's aunt has passed out facedown in a slow-spreading stain of red wine. You can even score points by acting compassionate. Pat her on the back occasionally and say, "There, there, it will be all right."

Bottom Line: Assuming a friend of yours is getting married, a wedding is hands down the best place to meet women. However, if it's a family obligation, be prepared to vomit on a table or pass out. If you want to drink without getting sick, limit yourself to simple mixed drinks such as vodka gimlets or rum and Cokes. It is an established fact that all catering companies get their wine from ex-Soviet satellite states. Two glasses of the stuff and you'll swear you can see the music.

CYBERSPACE

Upside: As you zoom around the information superhighway, you can't help feeling hip doing anything with the prefix cyber attached. Online, people seem friendly, and an awful lot of them are named luvbeast@penetration.com. How can a boy resist? Should you hit it off with someone, you get all the advantages

of a Victorian-style romance by letter. There's something sweet about sending note after note to a lover you've never met in the flesh. Some people even claim that e-mail romance is purer than any other kind.

Downside: If you can't type fast, you're screwed. And forget about your corporeal charm. It doesn't matter if you have a voice like Barry White's and a body like a professional gymnast's; she can't hear you or see you. Also, you must understand that many women you meet online are actually men. It's disconcerting how many of us will digitally cross-dress when given the chance. We happen to know a guy who conducted a steamy lesbian love affair online only to discover that his paramour was also a guy. It made for beautiful poetic justice but not good dating. There is a reason Net-conscious people ask whether you've made an "eye-D" of your online lover. And even if she isn't a man, she may not

PARTIES

sure, they can be the best of times and the worst of times. because there are many different types, we're going to break them down into a chart so you can decide which ones work for you

Type	Upside	Downside	Bottom Line
SMALL PARTIES	Everyone knows everybody else, and the atmosphere is relaxed and mellow.	Everyone knows everybody else. Yawn.	Good for seducing someone you already know, bad for meeting new people.
BIG PARTIES	Lots of mixing and music. Also, free-flowing alcohol lubricates social intercourse.	If you're shy or—even worse—boring, you're going to get lost in the mix. And with so many interesting people around, don't expect her to give you a second chance.	Be interesting or die.
SMALL PARTIES THAT TURN INTO BIG PARTIES	The press of too many people in a small place makes for lots of up close intimacy.	The hooch may run out, as may your date.	The situation offers the perfect chance to look deeply into her eyes and suggest you leave for someplace less crowded—like maybe her place.
BIG PARTIES THAT TURN OUT TO BE SMALL PARTIES	Fewer people to horn in on the person you're trying to talk to.	Everyone is kind of depressed and quiet because nobody showed up.	It's a good time to suggest that you go someplace more happening—like maybe her place.
WORK PARTIES	Lots of people you know, as well as their friends and mates. Good mix of the familiar and the new.	Everyone's either someone you work with or dating someone you work with. Life sucks.	See the previous section on Work, then listen repeatedly to *Your Cheatin' Heart*.
PUBLIC PARTIES	Tons of new people, all out for a good time.	Who wants to pay to party with strangers? Chances are you're going to feel like a big loser.	Marginally better than a bar, but still not a good place to meet women.
CLIQUE PARTIES	Similar to a small party, only with subdivisions.	Nobody gets to meet anybody new because all the guests are huddled in small social groups. Also, there's the nagging feeling your clique isn't as hip as the one over there.	It's a good time to suggest you go someplace less snotty and segregated—like maybe her place.

be—how should we say it nicely?—your physical type. This happened to the less lucky of your authors (he'd rather not identify himself because of his raw embarrassment). After several months of romantic correspondence with a lady in another city, he discovered that the object of his desire was rather plain-looking. Despite his intellectual conviction that appearances shouldn't matter, he found that they do. More than he'd care to admit.

Bottom Line: Although the number of female users is growing, the Internet is still something of a boys' club. A woman who goes fishing on the Net can be choosy. You, on the other hand, are joining a cast of thousands. We don't like those odds. For all the stories about people falling in love on the Net, we suspect that the majority of digital romances consist of men masturbating to the speed-typing of other men in America Online's BiFem4Fem chat room. Do not trust *Wired*, Nicholas Negroponte, the EFF or any of those other shameless, self-promoting, futuristic hucksters on this one. When it comes to finding your true love, old ways are the best ways.

CONVERSING AND IMPRESSING

Once you find a woman, the next step is to persuade her to talk to you. First impressions are important, and you must master your approach. It requires common sense, which most guys don't possess. But follow these five simple rules, and you should be able to talk with a woman without fear of instant rejection.

Get a life: Have something to talk about. Have a nugget of interesting information at your disposal that you can share with her—whether it's about your job or your friends or even something you saw on TV last night. Sure, it's nice if you listen to her. However, there are only so many times you can ask, "What do you think?" before you will be expected to say something on your own.

Eye contact: It's more difficult than it sounds. Don't look at her breasts or her legs or her hair or the woman seated at the other end of the bar or the guy who just walked out of the men's room who you think might be a friend from college. Look at her eyes. Eye contact is the best way to say, I am listening to you. It is also the best way to say, I challenge your standing as leader of the herd. But that's another issue altogether.

Keep away from controversial subjects: Your first conversation with a woman is not the best time to debate politics. Stick to safe topics like your favorite color or what shapes clouds make. Even a harmless comment like "I hate sitting next to a crying baby on a plane" can lead to a heated discussion of child-care reform and abortion rights. Next thing you know you have a ranting demagogue on your hands, demanding to know whether or not you support school voucher systems.

Bring your paperwork: Most women will not give you the time of day unless you can prove with proper documentation that you are disease-free, are over 21, have a job and have never been convicted of a felony. Carry the required paperwork with you at all times as well as a picture ID for further verification.

Do not have a mustache: Period. End of discussion.

BUT IS SHE RIGHT FOR YOU?

At first she may seem perfect. She's pretty, she's smart and she likes you. That's fine if all you're looking for is a pleasant dinner companion. But is she someone you could spend serious time with and maybe even commit to in a long-term relationship? Too many men forget that they are not the only ones required to audition for love. Sure, you must learn to accept *Melrose Place*, chick flicks and Fiona Apple. But does she share your interests as well? To find out if she has what it takes to keep your attention, ask her to take this short and simple quiz. If she answers yes to even one of these questions, you may have found a soul mate.

(1) Have you seen the original *Star Wars* trilogy?

(2) Do you know which of the Three Stooges coined the memorable phrase "woo-woo-woo"?

(3) Can you hold your whiskey, or at least respect a man who can?

(4) Do you know the difference between a free throw and a foul shot?

(5) Can you hum a few bars from a Kiss song? (*Beth* does not count.)

(6) Can you discuss without mockery the career of David Hasselhoff?

(7) Do you know how to check the oil in a car?

(8) Have you ever sat through an entire screening of *Scarface*? If not, would you be willing to do so?

(9) Can you tell the difference between a G.I. Joe doll with kung-fu grip and a G.I. Joe action figure?

(10) Do you appreciate the subtle charms of a concealed handgun?

(11) Does the name Jenna Jameson mean anything to you?

"I may have called out another man's name, but look on the bright side: You're the one who's getting laid."

John Holmes

(continued from page 124)

cut me in for whatever you think is right."

On June 29, 1981 Holmes showed up at the Nash villa to party and buy drugs. He left a few hours later, unlocking a door on his way out. Early the same morning, Launius, DeVerell and two of their low-life friends, Tracy McCourt and David Lind, slipped in through the unlocked door and surprised Nash and his bodyguard in the living room. Lind flashed a stolen police badge, waved a .357 Magnum and told them to freeze.

As the intruders struggled to handcuff the hugely fat bodyguard, Launius fell against Lind's gun hand and the .357 went off, leaving a nasty muzzle burn across Diles' back. The gunshot frightened Nash onto his knees. He began to cry, invoking his children and begging for his life. Launius put his gun into Nash's mouth and demanded the combination to his floor safe, which Holmes had identified as the drug stash. In it they found several pounds of coke, thousands of quaaludes, money and jewelry. They took a large vial of heroin from a bedroom dresser and then fled.

Holmes was waiting for them when they returned to the Wonderland house, and he watched as they weighed and counted their booty. Altogether they had robbed Nash of more than $100,000 in cash, $150,000 in jewelry, eight pounds of cocaine, a kilo of heroin and 5000 quaaludes. Holmes smoked some of the coke as he waited for his split, which came to $3000. When he complained that they were cheating him, Launius punched him in the stomach and threw him out.

For Billy DeVerell and Ron Launius—who had swindled other drug dealers by selling them bags of baking powder—the caper was the perfect score. What was Nash going to do, call the cops? As it turned out, although he wasn't the first gangster they had ripped off, he would be the last.

•

Detective Tom Lange and his partner, Bob Souza, received a call around 4:30 the afternoon of July 1, 1981. They were working with a special unit of the LAPD's Robbery and Homicide Division that investigated high-profile murder cases. Fourteen years later, Lange and his subsequent partner, Philip Vannatter, would become painfully famous as the lead investigators in the O.J. Simpson case. But as brutal as those murders were, they didn't come close to the butchery Lange and Souza found when they arrived on Wonderland Avenue.

"Tom and I thought we'd seen it all," said Souza, a bear-sized man with a short salt-and-pepper beard. "But I'd never seen so much blood. Four people bludgeoned to death and a fifth victim who survived. It was gruesome."

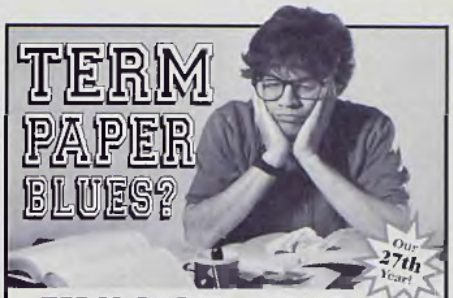
The video of what they found fits Souza's description. It was the first time that a multiple-murder scene had been videotaped by the LAPD (coinciding with the changeover from film to video in the porn industry), and though the quality of the police tape is rough, the scene it renders is chillingly vivid. As the camera is moved from room to room, blood is everywhere: on the floors, the furniture, the walls, even the ceilings. Barbara Richardson, Lind's girlfriend and an overnight visitor, lies in a pool of blood and brains on the floor next to the couch where she had been sleeping. (Lind was not home when the murderers arrived.) Ron Launius sprawls in a bloody bed, as does Joy Miller. Billy DeVerell, probably the only one who had had a chance to fight back, is in a half-seated slump beneath a television. Susan Launius, Ron's wife, was beaten severely around the head. The blows crushed her skull in a way that impaired bleeding and allowed her to be rushed to the hospital in time to survive.

That night, Lange and Souza, both retired now from the LAPD and working as private investigators, began their probe into what they called the "four-on-the-floor murders." They knew from previous police surveillance of the house, and from needles and pipes and pills they found there, that it was a drug case. And from the position of the bodies they knew that at least three, and perhaps as many as five, assailants had participated in the slaughter.

"The next day we got a call from a go-between stating that a David Lind would talk to us," Lange said. "When we met with him he sat there popping pills—rainbows, cartwheels, everything—and told us the whole story of the Nash robbery and Holmes' involvement. In fact, he was the one who figured out that Holmes had played both ends against the middle and had set up the Wonderland gang the same way he had set up Nash."

As it turned out, a couple days after the robbery, Nash had confronted Holmes about his part in it. Diles had taken Holmes' address book from him, and when Nash found the names of John's family members in Ohio, he told him that he would kill them all, every last one, if he didn't identify his partners in the robbery.

There are several versions of what happened next. Lange and Souza, who are writing a book with Nils Grevillius about the crime, *Four on the Floor: The Laurel Canyon Murders*, are convinced that Holmes led the Nash gang to the house, let them in, then watched as they went about the carnage. "He may have assisted in the killing of Ron Launius," said Lange. "He hated him, was terrified of him. We found Holmes' palm print on



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a bed rail above Launius' body, an incriminating place for it to be."

"He was there all right, but he didn't do it, and neither did Nash," said Amerson, who believes that people were lined up to kill the Wonderland bunch. "The morning of the murders I got a call from a good friend, Dee Samuels, who was a hit man. He'd been staking out the Wonderland house because he had a contract to kill the guys and was waiting for his moment. He told me, 'I just saw your friend John Holmes coming out of there alone, covered in blood. I went in to see what was going on, and they were all dead.' John showed up at my house a half hour later, all wild and bloody, saying he'd gone over there to let the Nash bunch in and found everybody, except Susan Launius, dead already. She was moaning, so he rolled her back onto the bed, then went through the house looking for coke and whatever else he could find. He was carrying something in a pillowcase when he showed up at my place. He was crazed, said he needed money and a car. So I gave him 20 bucks and a fully restored 1960 Ford Fairlane convertible, and he took off. A while later Dee told me that along with his contract and Nash's contract, there was a third hit out on these people, and that two methamphetamine dealers who'd been burned by the group got there first." Lange and Souza, who interviewed the two speed merchants, say they believe the two men arrived after the murders, searched the bloody scene, stepped over Susan Launius as she lay on the floor moaning for help, then left.

John's first wife, Sharon, said that he showed up at her house in bloody clothes, saying that he'd led three of the Nash gang to the house (he didn't say whether Nash was there), where they forced him to watch as they beat the victims. She said he took a bath, then drove to a motel in the valley to be with a girlfriend.

Lange and Souza's investigation of the case was frustrated almost immediately when their superiors forbade them to talk to the primary suspects.

"I don't want to get into details we're saving for the book," said Lange, "but this was unprecedented. Robbery and Homicide always had complete autonomy in running its cases, and all of a sudden we were being told not to talk to Eddie Nash, not to interview John Holmes. As it turned out, a federal agent who was working on a RICO case against Nash accused us of being dirty. He said we were failing to act on information against Nash that we had. It wasn't true. Unbeknownst to us, the department launched an internal investigation. We were eventually cleared. Meanwhile, we were wondering what the hell was going on."

"It was all done to derail the investigation," said Souza, "and it was pretty

successful. They didn't take us off the case, but they brought in another detective, Frank Tomlinson, who we were told had a rapport with Holmes. Frank began working with us, and when Holmes turned himself in, it was Tomlinson who interviewed him."

"They put him up at a hotel with his wife and one of his girlfriends," said Lange. "He partied for three days, ate big meals and drank expensive scotch. We finally sat in on one of the interviews and he didn't say anything. He was being the actor, playing both sides of the fence, talking shit."

Both Lange and Souza suspect that Nash had police and political connections that kept them from getting directly at him. And Holmes, it turned out, also had police connections. Because of the world he ran in, Holmes was the type of guy vice officers liked to keep on the hook, checking in with him from time to time. Although Holmes didn't always have valuable information, his police relationships further complicated the case.

Shortly after the hotel interviews, Holmes and his girlfriend ran. They were gone six months, staying for a while in a Florida trailer park, where Holmes worked as a handyman. Then Lange got a tip that Holmes' girlfriend was working in a strip club in Miami. He and Tomlinson flew to Florida and through her found Holmes. They arrested him on a murder warrant and brought him back to be tried.

In late June 1982, after deliberating over a mostly circumstantial case in which Holmes did not testify, the jury acquitted him. Despite the victory, Holmes was held on an outstanding burglary charge. The D.A. got a judicial order that compelled him to tell what he knew about the Wonderland murders. Because of the acquittal, his Fifth Amendment rights were moot, and when he refused to talk about the crime or Eddie Nash—whom he still feared would kill him—he was held for contempt. He spent 111 days in the Los Angeles County jail (and survived a murder attempt that he believed was a contract hit). Holmes finally decided to testify before a grand jury on the same day Eddie Nash was sentenced to prison on a drug charge. Whatever he said, the transcript remains sealed. Holmes then walked free into the ruins of his life.

"The day he got out of jail he showed up at my house driving a VW van he'd borrowed from his attorney," said Amerson, who hadn't seen Holmes since he'd been arrested. "He moved in and started a gigolo thing with a 65-year-old woman who gave him money and leased him a car. But he wasn't happy with it. He wanted to make movies, but nobody would hire him because he was so unreliable. Finally I got him a movie called

THE LONG AND THE SHORT OF IT

there was no upbeat ending for porn star john holmes

The rise and fall of Johnny Wadd (clockwise from upper left): John and bride Laurie at a Las Vegas wedding chapel—14 months later Holmes was dead; immortalized in cement—his hand, that is—in front of Los Angeles' Pussycot Theater; charged with four counts of murder in the 1981 Laurel Canyon bludgeonings; in the seat of power; conferring with his lawyer in court; a body being removed from Wonderland Avenue.

California Valley Girls by promising the producer that I'd guarantee any money he might lose if John fucked up."

Holmes had one scene in the film. Then Amerson put him to work as his assistant at VCX films, a porn company, and insisted that he get off drugs. For a while it seemed he had.

In late 1982, on the set of a film in San Francisco, he met Misty Dawn, a 19-year-old whose real name was Laurie Rose. Misty was an aspiring anal queen. She had read about Holmes' murder trial and was somewhat nervous about meeting him. "Shall I bring a gun to the set?" she asked the director. Instead, the two of them fell into something of a romance and eventually moved into the Amerson house together.

In 1985, Amerson left VCX to start his own production company, called Penquin Films. He gave John a junior partnership in the company—on the condition that he stay off drugs—and hired Laurie as the Penquin's bookkeeper. The company made 15 films in six months (using video), most of them starring Holmes, who had picked up his drug habit again and began embezzling from Penquin. Amerson claims, and Laurie Holmes denies, that $190,000 went unaccounted for.

"He was completely zonked," said Amerson. "He needed the money for drugs, and it got to where he was worthless. He'd come into the office, stay 20 minutes, then go to see one of his girlfriends and to get high."

It was around this time that Amerson decided to start testing Penquin's performers for HIV. Amerson, who was trying to set a good example for his employees, and Holmes were tested and both came up negative. They retested six months later, and went together to the doctor's office for the results.

"The doctor told us he had good news and bad news," said Amerson. "Then he looked at me and said, 'You're all right,' and John turned white. The doctor told him that just because he was HIV-positive didn't mean he would get AIDS, and that if he'd stop smoking and drinking and drugging he could live another 20 years. Of course, John immediately went to six packs of cigarettes a day and two quarts of scotch instead of one, and began using more drugs than ever."

Holmes started outpatient treatment at the Sepulveda VA Hospital amid speculation about where he'd picked up the virus. He had lots of unprotected sex professionally. He made a gay movie, *The Private Pleasures of John C. Holmes*, in 1983. And although many of the scenes were filmed with women disguised as men to keep him hard, he had performed one authentic anal sex scene with a gay star named Joey Yale, who died of AIDS not long after the filming.

In January 1987 Amerson got a call from Holmes, who was in Las Vegas. "I think I'm married," he said. "I'm all fucked up. I'm not sure, but I've got a ring, Laurie's with me and I think we're married."

•

By October, John Holmes was deteriorating fast. He eventually checked into the VA hospital, where Detective Lange visited him for the last time. Lange was collecting information for the trial of Nash and Diles, who had finally been charged in the Wonderland murders. (After a mistrial in 1990, both were retried and acquitted.)

"It was one of the greatest performances of his life," said Laurie, who was in the room when Lange questioned Holmes. "John would lean over slowly to stub out his cigarette, then start to answer the question, then become incoherent. He didn't tell them anything."

"It was a performance for sure," said Lange, "as if the cameras were rolling. It was typical John, full of shit."

John Holmes died on March 13, 1988. One of his last requests was that before his body was cremated, Laurie would view it to make sure that it was whole, that his famous dick would not end up in a jar. Then she, Holmes' mother and Holmes' half brother David scattered his ashes from a boat on the seaward side of Catalina Island.

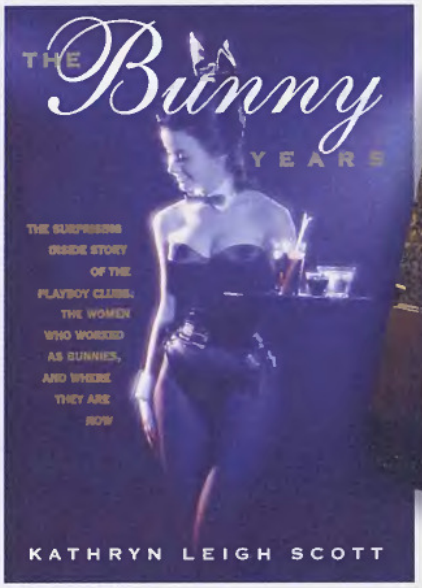
A week later, a memorial service was held at Forest Lawn Cemetery in Los Angeles. It was an unusual ending for a life filled with lies, distrust and betrayal. At his best, Holmes had never made friends easily, and after the murders he became increasingly reclusive and paranoid. "It doesn't pay to have friends," he said. "Friends will get you killed." And yet of the 52 friends invited to the service, 50 showed. Holmes would have been surprised.

"Well, why not a special Oscar for agents?"

PLAYMATE NEWS

COTTON TALE

Time flies. With the approaching millennium, the 40th anniversary of the first Playboy Club, which was housed on Chicago's Near North Side, is just around the corner. To celebrate, actress, author and former Bunny Kathryn Leigh Scott pays homage to our ears and tails. Her book *The Bunny Years: The Inside Story of the Playboy Clubs and the Women Who Worked As Bunnies* is based on interviews with more than 200 Bunnies and Scott's experience working in the New York Club during the Sixties. "The Clubs were magnets for independent, free-spirited women, many of whom have achieved remarkable success," she says. More than 5000 women worked as Bunnies worldwide. Among those profiled in *The Bunny Years* are Lauren Hutton, Susan Sullivan, Barbara Bosson and Deborah Harry. Feminist Gloria Steinem, who trained with Scott, once said about women: "We are all Bunnies." We take that as a compliment. Also featured in Scott's chronicle are several Bunnies who were Playmates as well, including Miss August 1964 China Lee, Miss December 1958 Joyce Nizzari and Miss July 1960 Teddi Smith. Many of the cottontails resided in the fourth-floor Bunny Dorm at Chicago's 70-room Playboy Mansion.


THE Bunny YEARS
THE SURPRISING INSIDE STORY OF THE PLAYBOY CLUBS: THE WOMEN WHO WORKED AS BUNNIES, AND WHERE THEY ARE NOW
KATHRYN LEIGH SCOTT

Playmate-turned-Bunny Joyce Nizzari

Collectors of Playboy memorabilia will appreciate seeing the Club extras: members' keys, costumes, dinnerware, ashtrays and cigarette lighters—and a look at the interiors of some of the Playboy Clubs. For those who were there, great memories abound. *The Bunny Years* will appear in bookstores in early April, or you can order copies in advance through the Playboy Catalog by calling 800-423-9494. Then go put Frankie on the hi-fi and encourage your best girl to dip.

PLAYMATE BIRTHDAYS — MARCH

Cher Butler—Miss August 1985 will be 34 on March 6.
Debra Jensen—Miss January 1978 will be 40 on March 12.
Dolores Del Monte—Miss March 1954 will be 66 on March 15.
Lisa Baker—Miss November 1966 and 1967 PMOY will be 54 on March 19.
Donna D'Errico—Miss September 1995 will be 30 on March 30.

PLAYMATES 101 BIRTHDAY BASHES

Karen Witter

Maybe it confirms astrology. Or maybe you should file this under weird coincidences: Six Playmates share a birthday on May 28: Leisa Sheridan, Gloria Root, Morgan Fox, Susie Owens, Victoria Cunningham and Patti Reynolds.

Another six share a birthday on December 13: Karen Witter, Eleanor Bradley, Deborah Driggs, Nancy McNeil, Victoria Valentino and Marianne Gravatte. What a celebration!

Leisa Sheridan

PARTY HARDY IN THE BIG APPLE

PLAYBOY goes out at night: Miss April 1995 Donelle Folta and Miss October 1994 Victoria Zdrok (below) made beautiful bookends for singer Buster Poindexter at El Flamingo this past fall. Poindexter launched his latest CD with backup on the maracas from two of his favorite Playmates. At another nightspot, the famed Elaine's, Executive Editor Kevin Buckley (bottom, center) entertained Miss December 1997 Karen McDougal and novelist Kurt Vonnegut. PLAYBOY published an excerpt of Vonnegut's *Timequake* (he calls it his last novel) in December 1997. Also attending the Vonnegut bash were Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Fox Television's Bill O'Reilly, essayist Calvin Trillin and Vonnegut's wife, photojournalist Jill Krementz.

PLAYMATE NEWS

FAN MAIL

I'm a PLAYBOY reader who looks at the photos before reading the text (I'm probably in the minority, right?). But your December *Playmate News* item on Glamourcon really has me confused. When I first saw the piece, I thought, Hey, just look,

Johnson

Jeinsen

there is Echo Johnson (Miss January 1993), the first Playmate younger than me and my absolute favorite Playmate. You will understand my confusion when I read the caption, which said Echo was Miss May 1993 Elke Jeinsen. Are Echo and Elke working on a sequel to *Face/Off*? Or, God forbid, is there an editor at the world's finest publication who needs a spanking?

Kristjan Scott Arnason
Belcarra, British Columbia

Kristjan, you'll be interested to know that you and Hef were the only ones who caught this mistake. We could tell you that Echo and Elke have the same initials, or that they were Playmates in the same year or that they sorta look alike—but that would sound too much like whining. We goofed, plain and simple.

I am pleased to see June Wilkinson featured in your December 1997 *Playmate Gallery*. June's thriving fan club was launched last April at Glamourcon 8. Hugh Hefner was presented with the club's first honorary lifetime membership for featuring June for five decades. May PLAYBOY and June Wilkinson continue forever.

Scott Hughes, President
June Wilkinson Fan Club
Woodridge, Illinois

Playmate Trivia

First twins: Mary and Madeleine Collinson (October 1970). First Bunny to become a Playmate: Jan Roberts (August 1962). First Playmate to indicate turn-ons and turnoffs: Lisa Winters (December 1956). First African American PMOY: Reneé Tenison (1990).

CAROL DUBER MALLISON

GLAMOURCON PRESENTS CENTERFOLDS

After receiving the green light from Hef, the Glamourcon organization will create a traveling Playmate autograph show called Glamourcon Presents Playboy's Classic Centerfolds. This series of one-day events brings together 25 to 30 Playmates, who will meet fans and autograph pictures. Because the show will be built solely around the Playmates, it can tour cities that the larger Glamourcon hasn't been able to visit. To keep up with the latest on this project, e-mail glamourcon@aol.com.

QUOTE UNQUOTE

After revving engines as a biker babe on PLAYBOY's August 1997 cover, Nikki Schieler shined as last year's Miss September. We recently spoke with newlywed Nikki (she's hitched to Ian Ziering from *Beverly Hills 90210*):

Q: A woman on a motorcycle—what's the attraction?

A: It shows her dark, dangerous side. Or it's all that power between her legs!

Q: What's always in your purse?

A: Lipstick, money and my pager. Victoria's Secret lotion, Boucheron perfume, hairclips and some Gummi Bears.

Q: How is it being married to a TV star?

A: It's weird when your man gets more attention than you do. Otherwise, it's great. Ian is normal. He does not have a celebrity-size ego.

Q: Where are we going to see you next?

A: I'm aggressively pursuing my acting career. I recently hosted *Playmates of the Eighties* on the E Channel. It was wild!

PLAYMATE GOSSIP

For our readers with an interest in our history: **Dolores Del Monte**, who was Miss March in 1954, has resurfaced. Del Monte says she didn't know that she had been selected as a Playmate until 25 years after the fact. "When the 25th anniversary issue came out, my son called me from college to say he had some news about my past." Del Monte has recently been promoting her daughter's line of Body Affair massage oils in the Playboy Catalog. . . . **Barbara Moore**, Miss December 1992, had a hectic modeling schedule last fall. She appeared in the October issue of *Cosmopolitan*, the November issue of *In Style* and was featured in the premiere issue of *Imagine* magazine. . . . Miss July 1996 **Angel Boris** signed up for five episodes of *Beverly Hills 90210*. She plays a journalist. . . . Miss June 1993 **Alesha Marie Oreskovich** and Miss November 1996 **Ulrika Ericsson** just completed a game-show pilot called *Casting Call*, with host **Michael Hartson**. . . . Look for Miss March 1997 **Jennifer Miriam** in **Richard Linklater's** *The Newton Boys*, starring **Ethan Hawke** and **Matthew McConaughey**. You'll also find her in the 1998 Texas Swimsuit Calendar. . . . Miss November 1989 **Reneé Tenison** and her twin sister **Rosie** frolicked at the Mansion for *Entertainment Tonight*, promoting their calendar.

LEROY NEIMAN

Hartson and Oreskovich

The Tenisons: Rosie and Reneé

I think we are one of the few catalogs that have been debated in the House of Commons.

13.

PLAYBOY: You merchandise the accoutrements of the British Empire. Do you have any Royalist leanings yourself?

PETERMAN: I have no political leanings that I wish to discuss. The mother country has delivered what we really like: knickers, though we can't sell knickers or socks in the U.S.; tweedy Norfolk jackets; tattersall shirts for men. English country life has always intrigued me. The seafaring aspect of the British Empire provides a treasure of things like navigation instruments. In their great wisdom some members of Parliament decided that the silverware they used in the House of Commons commissary—the stuff that Churchill and Chamberlain and Attlee ate with—was no longer useful. So we bought a good chunk of it and put it in our catalog, and it sold very well. And some members of Parliament weren't very happy about it. I think ours is one of the few catalogs that have been debated in the House of Commons. There's just an attitude. The English have been so stuffy and traditional for so long, and it's suddenly wonderful to have a tradition. People make fun of the tradition or say it's terrible. Everyone knocks it but they want to buy into it.

14.

PLAYBOY: Has any fashion trend of the past 50 years appealed to you?

PETERMAN: I had sideburns at one time. Men dressed better in the Twenties and Thirties than they do now. Since then, we've gone from the tailored to the more casual look. Soon the trend will probably reverse. I have one dark suit in my closet, in case I have to go to a funeral. But I'm beginning to get the urge to pop over to London and have a few suits made. I might want to fool around in a suit.

15.

PLAYBOY: *The Wall Street Journal* reported a while back that some companies have instituted dress codes for casual Fridays. The question: Is casual Friday an opportunity for self-expression or a cruel hoax perpetrated by management to give employees an illusion of freedom?

PETERMAN: Cruel hoax. What we were planning in this company was dress-up Friday—skirts for the ladies and jackets and ties for the men. We decided it was a fun idea but not something we really wanted to do.

16.

PLAYBOY: Acquaint us a little better with Lola, Amelia, Cecilia, Glenda, Jessica—and tell us what your spouse, Audrey, thinks of them.

PETERMAN: Those are girls I went to grade school with [*laughs*]. That's not really true. Audrey and I have a very good relationship, and she deals with them the same way any writer's wife would deal with the characters he writes. The catalog is literature. I met Lola in Paris. She's a waitress in a bistro on the Left Bank, near Deux Magots. There is a church, then around the corner and down the street is Lola. Amelia is Amelia Earhart. I like her. I didn't know her and I haven't gone to look for her. But she was made of the right stuff. Glenda was a very pretty girl I grew up with. She was several years younger than I, and of course I didn't appreciate her until I was older. Jessica is the name of a good friend's wife. She was a ballerina in her early years. We'll talk about Cecilia later.

17.

PLAYBOY: The term ten-denier describes a very sheer stocking. Should a gentleman educate himself about the finer points of women's hosiery?

PETERMAN: You should stop to appreciate beautiful legs in ten-denier stockings. They're exquisite. European men appreciate the beauty of women more than American men do. American men are so busy, so macho. They don't appreciate the finer things in life.

18.

PLAYBOY: Can we look forward to a larger selection of lingerie from J. Peterman? If so, would you care to share the joy of discovering it?

PETERMAN: There will be more lingerie. Found it in Europe. . . . You're pressing me for my sources! There's a wonderful flea market in Paris, past the Bastille. And there are little vintage shops all over Paris. Out of one of those would come things from the Twenties and Thirties. We've done chemises. We've done full slips. Two-piece sets. We've done silk pajamas, which look terrific without the top or without the bottom.

19.

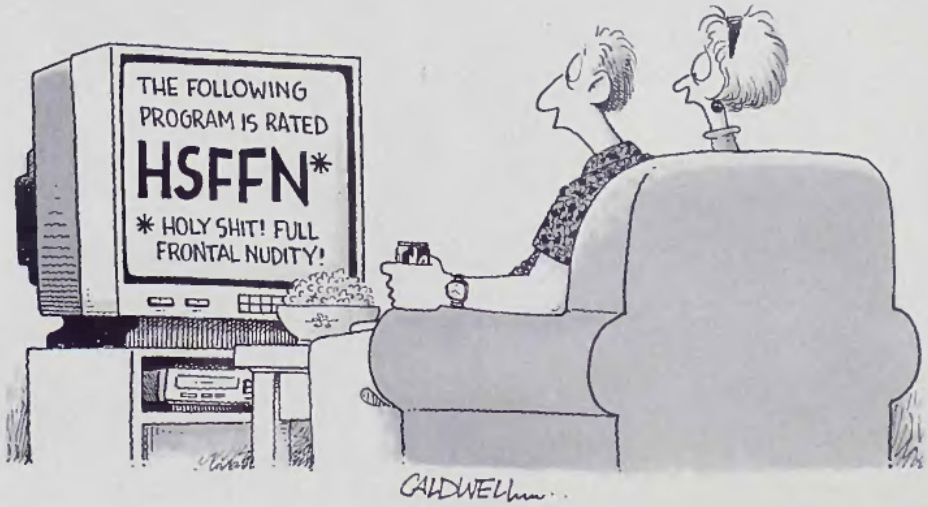
PLAYBOY: You've pitched khakis with one line that talks about visiting Hong Kong, Sumatra, Moscow and Nutley, New Jersey. So Peterman has experienced the beauty of the Yantacaw pond and sampled the great pea soup in that little place at the corner of Passaic Avenue and Center Street?

PETERMAN: You've gone through hell to research this. You realize that each piece of copy takes at least a day to write. Add up the number of pieces of copy, and you know how many writers we have. I know all the writers, but I'm not sure who wrote that.

20.

PLAYBOY: For those of us who are fans of Corvettes and T-birds, explain the appeal of your replica 1935 Auburn.

PETERMAN: It has one of the nicest asses I've ever seen. With its high fenders and its boat tail, the car is probably better looking from the rear than from the front. The Stutz Bearcat was an earlier boat tail, but it was kind of lumpy. The Duesenberg boat tail was very smooth but a little too rear-fendered. Auburns were a poor man's Duesenberg. There are more Auburns than Duesenbergs around, but they're still rare. In the Twenties and Thirties, there was a lot more beauty built into cars, as well as functionality. Car design began to get lost in the Forties and to get more utilitarian in the Fifties. Then some asshole in Detroit said you had to have big fins.



PLAYBOY ORIGINAL MOVIE

The Sexperiment

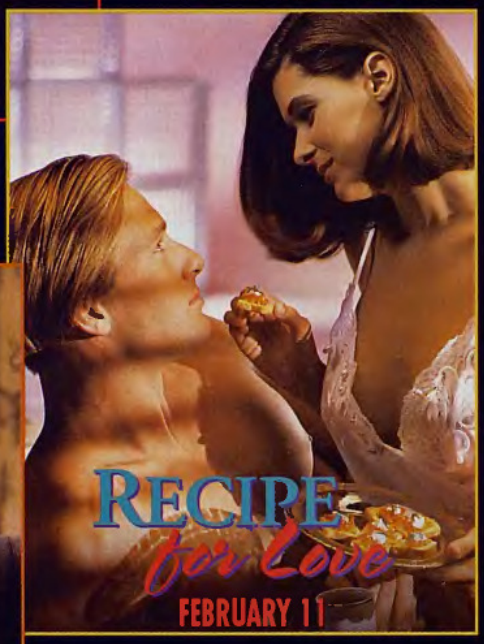
PREMIERES FEBRUARY 14

PLAYMATE HOSTS

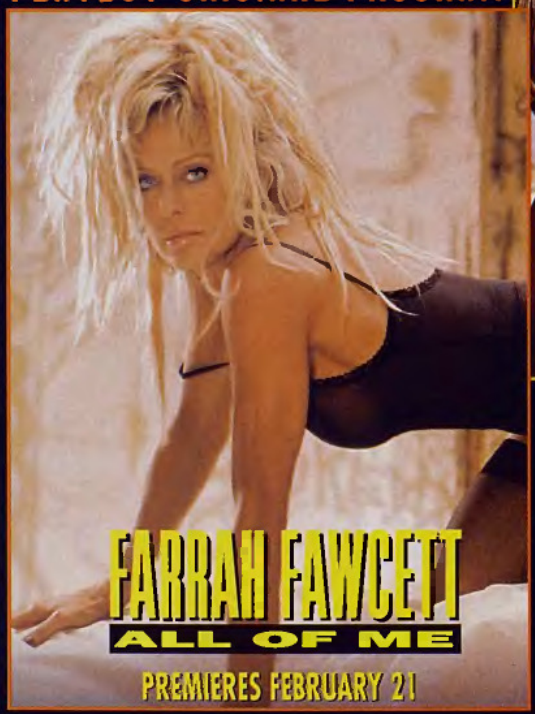
Julia Schultz
Miss February

Marliece Andrada
Miss March

SPECIAL PREVIEW



PLAYBOY ORIGINAL PROGRAM



ADULT MOVIES

more than you ever imagined...

This month, Playboy TV steals your heart away with *Farrah Fawcett: All of Me*, a Playboy exclusive that takes you on an unforgettable journey with the incomparable star. In the Playboy Original Movie *The Sexperiment* two sex behaviorists put themselves to the test and generate much more than data! Then, a classic is reborn as a Texas darling goes the distance to win a place on the hottest cheerleading team, in the adult movie, *Debbie Does Dallas: A New Beginning*. Next, Playboy TV plays Cupid in February with a *Recipe for Love* promotion including a Special Preview Wednesday, February 11. And in the adult movie *For the Love of Feet* little foot fetishes lead to big city crushes. So give yourself a special gift this month with Playboy TV – 24 hours a day!

PLAYBOY TV

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PLAYBOY
ON·THE·SCENE
WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHERE IT'S HAPPENING AND WHO'S MAKING IT HAPPEN

GET TWISTED

That reminds me of our trip to Afghanistan. We lost our corkscrew and were forced to survive for several days on food and water." This quote, attributed to W.C. Fields, pretty much sums up this indispensable item of barware. Today, there are styles galore and we've featured four of the best, ranging from an elegant sterling silver one that comes fitted in its own leather case to a lever-pull model that does the job in a second, plus a pair of champagne pliers to help you come to grips with your favorite bubbly. For the truly twisted, there's a coffee-table book appropriately titled *Corkscrews* (Schiffer Publishing, $79.95) that explores the history of the device, and a curious club named the International Correspondence of Corkscrew Addicts.

Left to right: Champagne pliers with a cowhorn handle and a cork-wire cutter, from Tuscan Square (about $114). The Bounty Hunter's horn-handled sommelier's corkscrew and knife that's made in the French village of Laguiole ($140). English sterling silver horse-head corkscrew from Asprey ($335). Stainless steel corkscrew that doubles as a wine-bottle stopper, from the LS Collection ($85). Le Creuset's corkscrew opens a bottle with two motions and features a Teflon-coated worm that helps eliminate broken corks, from Hammacher Schlemmer (about $150).

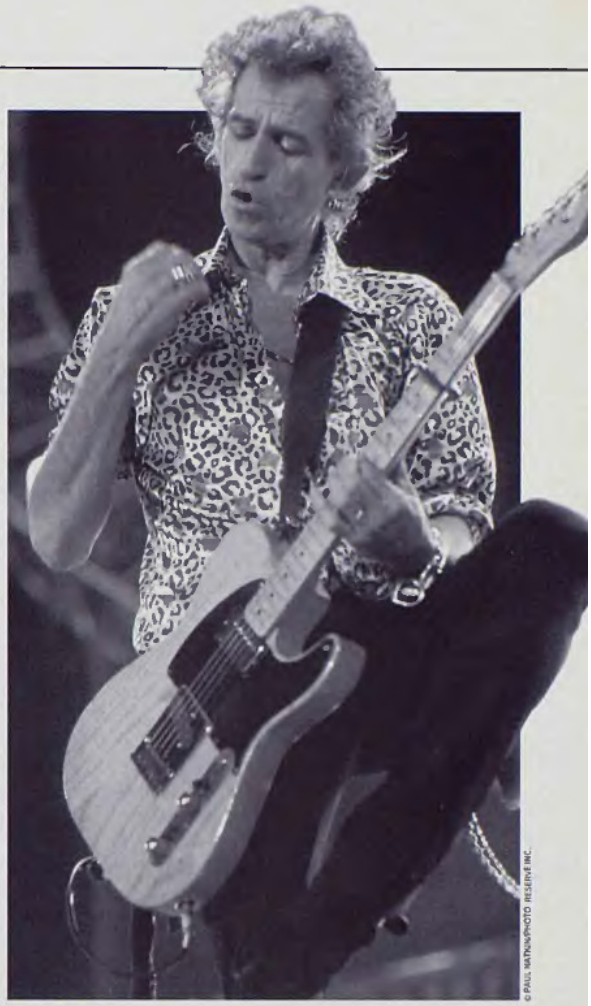
JAMES IMBROGNO

WHERE & HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 150.

Head for the Beach

TIFFANY GRAMZA waded into *Baywatch Nights* and appeared on TV's *Diagnosis Murder*. Look for her 1998–1999 calendars *Fast Dates, Garage Girls* and *Leather & Lace*. Then check the shoreline for motion in the ocean.

© TIM JARNIS



© PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE INC.

Let's Spend the Night Together

The most recent Stones party, *Bridges to Babylon*, finds KEITH alive and well, wearing leopard prints and pumping out 30-plus years of hits. You'll get what you need.

What Are Victoria's Secrets?

You can watch actress VICTORIA VOGEL on the Showtime series *Hot Springs Hotel*, then you'll remember seeing her in *Eden Quest* and *Destination Paradise*. Lucky you.

© TIM JARNIS

FITZROY BARRETT/GLOBE PHOTO

Weaver of Dreams

While we waited for SIGOURNEY WEAVER to tackle the impossible—a return from the dead in *Alien Resurrection*—we thank the fashion designers who encourage beautiful actresses to wear see-through fabrics.

© IRET ROBERTS

In the Cards

If Elvis was the roll, SCOTTY MOORE (left) and D.J. FONTANA were the rock. Elvis sang the songs, and Scotty, D.J. and the late Bill Black made the music. Hear them all shook up again on *All the King's Men.*

STEVE TORRES

Here We Go Lupe de Lupe

Fitness competitor and model LUPE BLACKBURN graced the cover of a Hawaiian tourist publication. Olé!

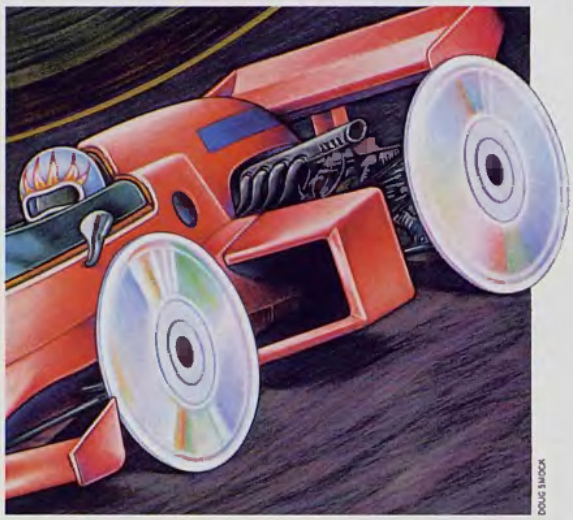
© PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE, INC.

Punk and Spunk

STELLA's band, Sister Soleil, has a techno-pop sound, and on its major-label debut, *Soularium*, you'll see why the buzz is loud. Stella's college tour is set for spring.

SOUNDS OF THUNDER

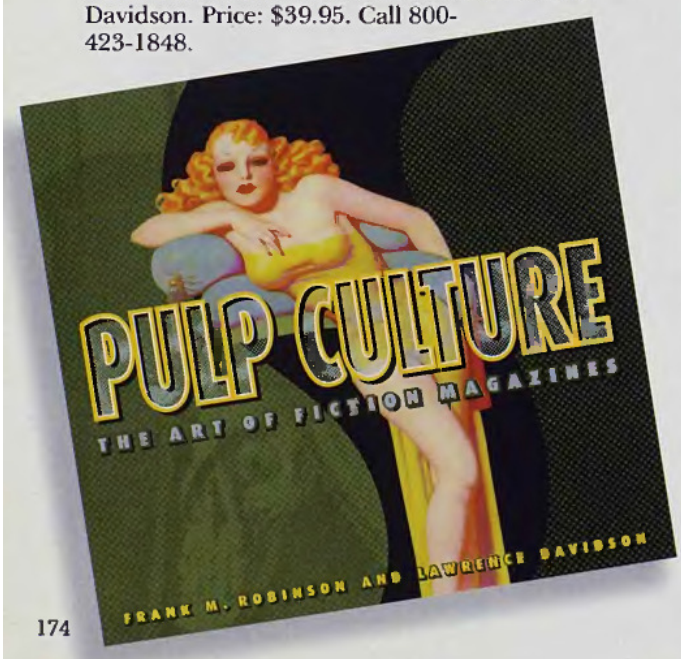
You may never tear up the track at 200 miles an hour the way Bobby Hamilton does, but pretending you're a famous race-car driver just got easier. All you need is a good stereo system and *The Sounds of Thierry Thompson's Motor-Racing Art*, a 73-minute CD that turns actual audio from Formula One, Indy Car, Nascar and Grand Prix motorcycle courses into tracks with such wild titles as *Adrenaline* and *Carbon Fiber*. Pop it into your 911's CD player and off you go. Price: $19.95 from 510-631-1183.



DOUG SMOCK

QUENTIN TARANTINO WOULD BE PROUD

Pulp Culture isn't an ordinary coffee-table book. Then again, pulp magazines aren't ordinary reading material. With titles such as *South Sea Stories* and *Foreign Legion Adventures* and works that include *The Maltese Falcon* by Dashiell Hammett, pulp fiction ranges from sexy to unusual. *Pulp Culture*, "a pictorial history of pulp magazines," features 440 color images of pulp covers from the early 1900s to the Fifties. The authors are Frank M. Robinson and Lawrence Davidson. Price: $39.95. Call 800-423-1848.



BABY, YOU'VE GOT BAWLS

With a caffeine level more than two and a half times higher than that of coffee or tea, it's no wonder Bawls has become the club scene's soft drink of choice. What's more, Bawls holds the promise of great sex: Its main ingredient, guarana, is a South American berry that's reputed to be an aphrodisiac. Bawls' lightly carbonated and refreshingly sweet taste is somewhere between cream soda and ginger ale. The price: about $1.25 for a ten-ounce bottle in convenience stores such as Walgreens and Quik Stop; $2 to $3.50 in clubs and restaurants, including the Hard Rock Café. Or tote a bottle to the gym for a high-energy workout.

WRITE ON

Signing on the dotted line has never been so inspiring, thanks to Acme Studio's new line of fountain and rollerball pens. The lacquer-finished styles showcase designs by renowned artists and architects. One features PLAYBOY's famous Rabbit Head. Pictured from top to bottom are *Playhouse* by Frank Lloyd Wright, *Skyscrapers* by James Rizzi, the *Playboy Pen*, *Siena II* by Michael Graves, *Detail From Doubles* by Keith Haring and *Untitled* by Piet Mondrian. Each comes in an aluminum case. Prices: $39 to $45. Call 800-447-2263.

VINO VENTILATION

No time to let wine breathe before dinner? Try the Red Wine Breatheasy, a silver-plated device that, when used with a decanter, delivers soft, round wine that shows better fruit. As wine is poured through the funnel, it forms a balloon and cascades down the decanter's interior wall, providing accelerated aeration. A stainless steel filter traps cork crumble and sediment. Price: $85. Call 800-249-9738, ext. 84.

SCENT OF A WOMAN

Jean-Paul Gaultier puts as much effort into dressing his fragrance bottles as he does his runway models. In 1993 the designer introduced the Jean-Paul Gaultier Extract, a scent that came in a sexy, woman-shaped glass bottle adorned with a tiny copper corset. From 1994 to 1996, Gaultier's trademark fragrance bottles featured a gray metal corset, a brass corset and a *vert de gris* corset. The latest perfume, Lace Corset, comes in a bottle wrapped with a satiny nickel corset and a black lace veil. Now that's haute couture. Price: $160. Call 212-715-7333, or check department stores.

SEX MARKS THE SPOT

Fred Colcer has been producing bookmarks made of postage stamps for 25 years, but his erotic line caught our eye. Made from genuine (often controversial) stamps that were issued in Paraguay, Hungary, Ajman and Manama from 1970 to 1985, the bookmarks feature more than 30 varieties of erotic sculpture and paintings. Five bookmarks cost $10. To order a set, write Stamp-bookmarks! at 423 East Ojai #107-510, Ojai, California 93023.

STOGIE WORDS

You might say that Richard Carleton Hacker's career is smoking. The author of the best-selling *Ultimate Cigar Book* has been a contributor to PLAYBOY and has also found time to host more than 100 cigar seminars nationwide since 1994. Now Hacker has created *Cigar Quest—Conversations in Smoke*, the world's first audiocassette (two tapes) on cigars. The tapes run 180 minutes, or about the time it takes to finish four churchill-sized smokes. Hacker mixes wisdom and wit while discussing how to pick, light and age cigars and how to assess the quality of Cuban brands. There are interviews with cigar manufacturers, trivia and more. *Cigar Quest* costs $19.95 at smoke shops.

THE FLIP SIDE OF DR. SEUSS

Worldwide, Dr. Seuss is known as the author of 48 children's books, from *The Cat in the Hat* to *Oh, The Places You'll Go!* In smaller circles, he's known as Theodor Geisel, the man whose private art collection—which showcases Seussian creatures in rare form—was painted at home and "intended for adult eyes." Several of these works, including *A Plethora of Cats*, a vibrant display of dozens of cat heads, are available as hand-pulled serigraphs on canvas. Shown here is *Indistinct Cat With Cigar*, a 28″x48″ limited edition. Price: $2100. Call 888-224-2731.

NEXT MONTH

BRAVA, BRAHMS

SINATRA AT SUNSET

JAZZ AND ROCK RULE

JODY WATLEY

SEX AND MUSIC SPECTACULAR—THAT'S RIGHT, OUR TWO FAVORITE THINGS IN ONE ISSUE!

THE MUSIC BUZZ—SO MANY BEATS, SO LITTLE TIME. NOT TO WORRY. WE'VE HELPED YOU OUT IN OUR ROUNDUP OF WHAT'S DOING IN DJS, CLUBS AND BANDS. THINK **MISSY ELLIOTT,** NYC'S KNITTING FACTORY, **RONI SIZE,** GODMOTHER'S LESBIAN LOVER AND MORE

THE RETURN OF CASUAL SEX—DESPITE AIDS, MEN AND WOMEN STILL SLEEP AROUND. IS FREE LOVE BACK? WAS THE ONE-NIGHT STAND EVER GONE? A PROVOCATIVE REPORT BY **LORI WEISS**

SINATRA AT SUNSET—A TRIBUTE TO THE CROONER AND LADIES' MAN, THAT MOST DURABLE OF TALENTS AND RAT-PACK RINGLEADER WHO LIVED OUT THE BACHELOR FANTASY—ARTICLE BY **DAVID HALBERSTAM**

JODY WATLEY—THE DISCO DIVA IS LOOKING FOR A NEW LOVE AND SHOWING HER BEST IN PLAYBOY. DON'T MISS HER LATEST CAREER MOVE

THE YEAR IN MUSIC—MOVERS AND SHAKERS THIS YEAR RANGED FROM **LEANN RIMES** TO **TINA TURNER** (NOW THERE'S AN AGE DIFFERENCE). HOW DID YOUR VOTES STACK UP? FIND OUT IN OUR SURPRISING **JAZZ AND ROCK POLL** RESULTS

AN INNOCENT BYSTANDER—PICKING UP HITCHHIKERS CAN BE RISKY, BUT PICKING UP TEENAGE GIRLS IS DOWNRIGHT DANGEROUS. A ROADSTER GOES FOR THE RIDE OF HIS LIFE IN FICTION BY **GARY KRIST**

JOE ESZTERHAS—IS HE THE MOST OVERPAID, ARROGANT WRITER IN HOLLYWOOD? THE GUY WHO MADE A NAME FOR HIMSELF BY SCRIBING *JAGGED EDGE*, *BASIC INSTINCT* AND *SHOWGIRLS* HAS MADE MOVIES MORE INTERESTING. DELVE INTO JOE'S WORLD IN A TWO-FISTED INTERVIEW BY **MICHAEL FLEMING**

KEITH OLBERMANN—AS THE HOST OF MSNBC'S *BIG SHOW*, OLBERMANN'S DRY WIT AND ACERBIC COMMENTARY ARE ADDICTIVE. **WARREN KALBACKER** CROSSCHECKS THE SAVVIEST SPORTS-AND-NEWS GUY IN 20 QUESTIONS

FABULOUS SPRING PREVIEW: CONCEPT CARS FOR THE MILLENNIUM, SUMMER HAIR GELS AND COLOGNE, WARMWEATHER FASHIONS, THE NEXT GENERATION OF ELECTRONICS, PLUS THE BOMBSHELL VIKING VIOLINIST **LINDA BRAVA** AND GIRL-NEXT-DOOR **HOLLY JOAN HART**

You can
switch down
to lower tar
and enjoy the taste.
Go for it!

Yes, you!

You've got MERIT

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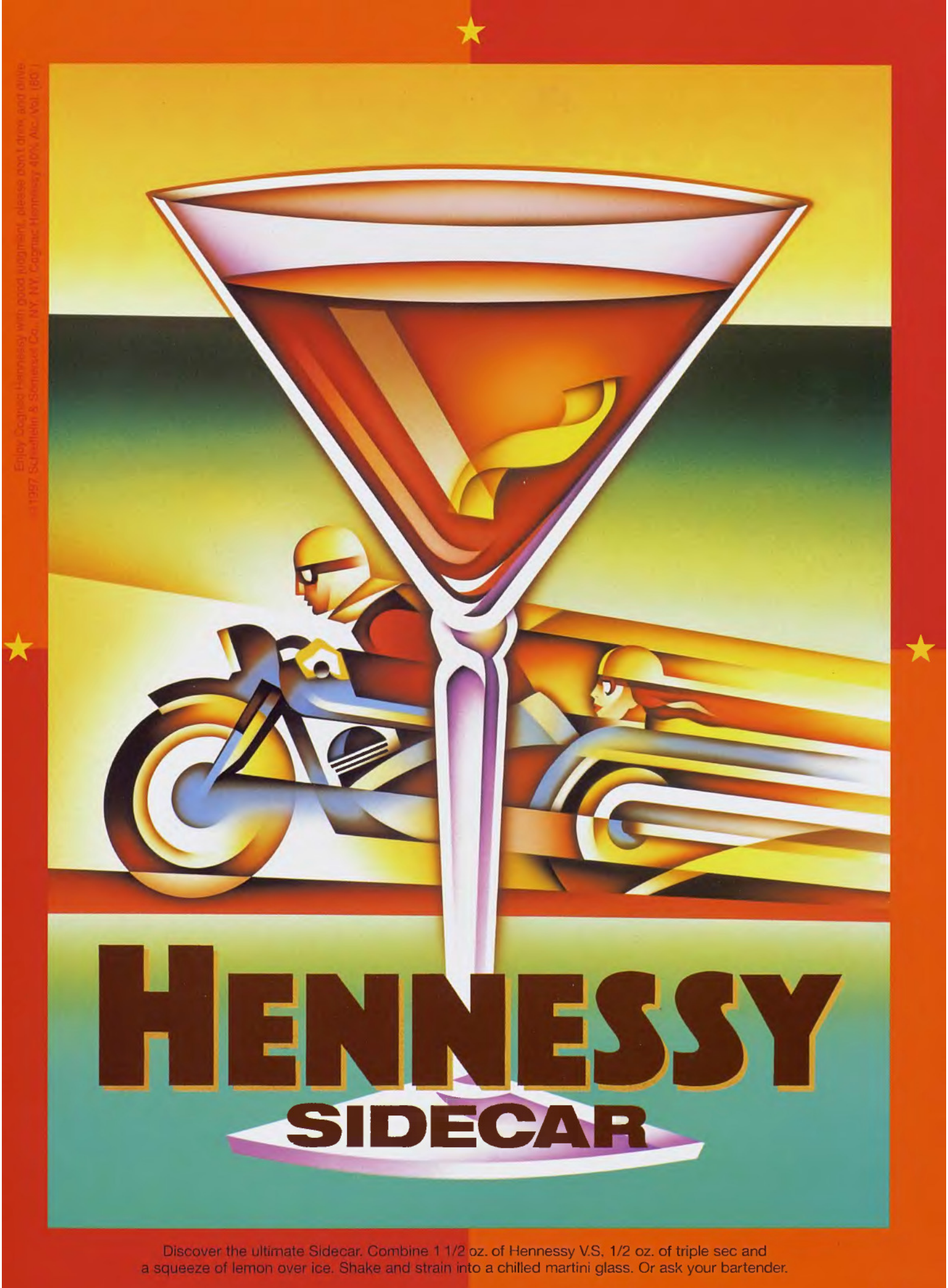
Ultima: 1 mg "tar," 0.2 mg nicotine–Ultra Lights: 5 mg "tar," 0.5 mg nicotine–Kings: 7 mg "tar," 0.6 mg nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Quitting Smoking Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health.



Discover the ultimate Sidecar. Combine 1 1/2 oz. of Hennessy V.S, 1/2 oz. of triple sec and a squeeze of lemon over ice. Shake and strain into a chilled martini glass. Or ask your bartender.

Enjoy Cognac Hennessy with good judgment, please don't drink and drive.
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